

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ST JOHN'S CE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Crowborough

LEA area: East Sussex

Unique reference number: 114549

Headteacher: Mrs L Cooper

Lead inspector: Mr P Mann

Dates of inspection: 17<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> May 2004

Inspection number: 257714

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary  
School category: Voluntary Aided  
Age range of pupils: 4-11  
Gender of pupils: Mixed  
Number on roll: 217

School address: School Lane  
St John's  
Crowborough  
Postcode: TN6 1SD

Telephone number: 01892 661189  
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Appropriate authority: Governing Body  
Name of chair of governors: Mrs Gwen Young

Date of previous inspection: 1.3.1999

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St John's CE Primary School has 217 pupils on roll, aged 4 to 11. It serves a residential area of Crowborough in East Sussex. The home backgrounds of most pupils is above average. The number who are in receipt of a free school meal is very small and well below the national average. The original Victorian building has been extended on several occasions. The buildings are surrounded by a playground, grassed areas, a small piece of woodland and a sports field. At the time of the inspection, there were ten children under five in the reception class. The attainment of children at the start of school in Year 1 is above average. A total of 35 pupils have been identified as having special educational needs and this is average. Four of these pupils receive support from outside agencies and currently there is one pupil with a statement of special educational need. The proportion of pupils from ethnic minority groups is very small.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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29988	Lynne Thorogood	Team inspector	Areas of learning in the Foundation Stage, English, Art

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school and pupils work hard within a caring Christian community. The level of school effectiveness is **good** overall taking current circumstances into account. Pupils' achievement is **good** in several subjects. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are generally taught well but sometimes insufficient emphasis is placed on the quality of pupils' writing. The specialist teaching of some other subjects contributes well to the overall good levels of pupil achievement. The governing body has provided good levels of support to the school both now and before the appointment of the new headteacher. The quality of her leadership is very good and her very effective evaluation of the school's work has already led to significant improvements in the quality of education being provided for all pupils. Given the resources available to the school, the overall achievement of pupils and breadth of learning opportunities available, the school provides good value for money.

#### The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards in English overall are above average for 11 year olds. Standards are well above average in mathematics and science for these pupils.
- Standards are also above average for 11 year olds in information and communication technology, design and technology and history. They are above average in art across the school.
- Procedures for the assessment and monitoring of pupils' work are unsatisfactory.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good and relationships around the school are very positive.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is of the highest quality.
- The range of activities outside of lessons is very good.
- The role of the subject co-ordinator is underdeveloped

The level of improvement since the previous inspection has been **good**. Standards in information and communication technology are now above average. Good levels of challenge are now being provided in many lessons for more able pupils and excellent provision has been put in place for those with special educational needs. Although standards in writing are average overall insufficient attention is given to handwriting, spelling and punctuation. Financial planning is now more closely linked to curriculum development. The school's capacity for further improvement is **good**.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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.

The results in the 2003 national tests for 11-year-olds are average in English, well above average in mathematics and above average in science. Compared with schools of similar circumstances and based on value added data, these results are well below average in English, average in mathematics and below average in science. These results indicate a degree of underachievement in the past in English and science. When the results of pupils in Year 2 taking the 2003 national tests are compared to schools nationally, standards are below average in reading; they are average in writing and mathematics. Compared to schools with similar circumstances, these results are well below average in reading, writing and mathematics. Wide variations in overall attainment have occurred year on year but the overall trend in improvement has been broadly similar to the national picture since the previous inspection. Generally girls do better than boys at the age of seven but overall there are no significant differences between the achievements of girls and boys.

The rate of pupils' achievement across the school is **good** overall but best for the oldest junior pupils. Aspects of underachievement for 11 year olds are now being effectively addressed. Inspection findings confirm that standards for 11 year olds are now above average in English overall with very high standards being attained in reading. Speaking and listening skills are above average but writing is only average. This is because insufficient emphasis is placed on spelling, handwriting and grammar. The school is successfully raising overall standards and levels of achievement in mathematics and science where good achievement is sustained across the junior classes to reach standards that are well above average in both subjects. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as a result of the excellent provision made available to them. The specialist teaching of some other subjects is proving to be a very effective strategy in raising standards. As a result, all pupils are achieving well across the school in art, design and technology, French, history, information and communication technology (ICT) and music.

The majority of children enter the reception class with generally above average levels of attainment. This is particularly noticeable in all areas of development except for their physical skills in movement where standards are generally in line with nationally expected levels in this area of learning.

### **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The quality of education is **good** overall with a strong emphasis placed in providing a wide range of learning experiences for all pupils.

The quality of teaching and learning is **good** overall with some very good or excellent teaching in the school. The teaching of children in the reception class is consistently good and there is an effective balance between activities that are adult-led and others that are freely chosen by the children. The teaching of pupils in the rest of the school is never less than satisfactory but best for the youngest infants and older junior pupils. Marking and assessment of pupils' work are inconsistent in quality and unsatisfactory overall. However, there are models of very good practice in the assessment of pupils' progress within the school. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good. The specialist teaching of information and communication technology, design and technology, French and music to junior pupils is a strength of the school.

The school offers a **good** range of learning opportunities through a balanced and broad curriculum that caters for the needs of all pupils. The curriculum is further enhanced through a very good range of opportunities after school and at lunchtime to develop social skills and academic learning. Good provision has been put in place for children in the Foundation Stage. The arrangements for pupils with special educational needs are excellent and support assistants make an important contribution to the achievements of these pupils. The good accommodation and resources are used effectively to meet the needs of all pupils.

The school effectively cares for its pupils in a friendly, Christian environment, which has a nice family feel. Parents are very supportive of the school, particularly through helping in class and fundraising. The partnership between parents and the school is good and improving because of the new headteacher's approachable style of management.

### **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management of the school are **good**. The newly appointed headteacher provides very good leadership and has a clear vision for the development of the school. She has instilled a sharper focus on whole school improvement. Staff and governors share her very clear vision for the school's work and much has already been achieved in a short space of time. Other key staff support her well and provide good leadership. The curriculum management is satisfactory overall but the role of subject co-ordinator is underdeveloped. The governing body has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and is fully involved in its development. Planning for whole school improvement is now good and closely linked to good monitoring of the school's work. The principles of best value are being implemented well and financial management is good.

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

Parents are pleased with what the school offers. They particularly appreciate the interesting curriculum and wide range of opportunities provided for their children, for example in sports, visits out, drama and ICT. They are pleased to have been consulted recently and feel their views are increasingly being listened to. Parents would like homework to improve and feel it is better in some classes than in others. Inspectors judge that provision for homework is in line with what is expected in other primary schools. The school is currently reviewing its procedures.

Pupils enjoy school, especially the visits out and residential trips. They value the friendly, family atmosphere in school. They are largely happy about most things but some would like school meals to be healthier.

### **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- improve the quality of writing and in particular for the more able pupils, through the effective teaching of handwriting, spelling and punctuation;
- develop a whole school approach to the assessment and monitoring of pupils' achievement;
- further develop the role of subject co-ordinators.



## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

Overall, pupils' achievement is **good** across the school. Standards are **good** in English and **very good** in mathematics and science by the time pupils are eleven. They are also **good** in several other subjects for pupils of this age.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement in reading is good across the school.
- Insufficient attention is given to the development of writing skills.
- The rate of pupil achievement in mathematics and science is good.
- Pupils make good progress in most foundation subjects.
- The achievement of children in the Foundation Stage is good.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to their previous learning.

#### Commentary

1. The results in the 2003 national tests for 11-year-olds are average in English, well above average in mathematics and above average in science. When these results are compared with schools of similar circumstances and based on value added data they are well below average in English, average in mathematics and below average in science. When the results of pupils in Year 2 taking the 2003 national tests are compared to schools nationally standards are below average in reading; they are average in writing and mathematics. When compared to schools with similar circumstances, using free school meals data, standards are well below average in reading, writing and mathematics. Wide variations in overall attainment have occurred year on year but the overall trend in improvement has been broadly similar to the national picture since the previous inspection. Generally girls do better than boys at the age of seven but overall there are no significant differences between the achievements of girls and boys.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.3 (16.4)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	14.4 (15.0)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	16.3 (16.7)	16.3 (16.3)

There were 31 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.3 (28.6)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	28.4 (29.0)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	29.6 (29.4)	28.6 (28.5)

There were 35 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. These past results represent a degree of underachievement. This issue has immediately been recognised by the newly appointed headteacher. As a result, noticeable improvements in pupil standards have already been achieved through an effective monitoring of teaching programme, a strong focus on improving the quality of learning through staff training and increasing teacher expectation of what pupils can achieve. For instance, the school is successfully raising overall standards and levels of achievement in mathematics and science where good achievement is sustained across the junior classes to reach standards that are well above average in both subjects. Good levels of challenge are provided in both subjects for more able pupils and a strong emphasis is placed on problem solving and investigative work.
3. However, although the number of pupils working at the expected levels in English are above the national average, the inconsistent teaching of handwriting, spelling and grammar is holding many of these pupils back from attaining the higher Level 5 in their writing. In contrast, speaking and listening skills are above average and very high standards are being attained in reading. Standards in speaking, listening and reading are also above average for seven year olds but average overall in writing, with very little Level 3 work in evidence.
4. Combined with a strong focus on the improvement of teaching and learning, the specialist teaching of some foundation subjects is proving to be a very effective strategy in raising standards. As a result, all pupils are achieving well across the school in art, design and technology, French, history, information and communication technology (ICT) and music. These above average standards are confirmed by the very effective displays of the pupils' work around the school. The provision for ICT has been significantly improved since the previous inspection and combined with good teaching it is contributing effectively to the good achievements of all pupils in this subject.
5. Children enter the reception class with levels of attainment that are generally above that expected of similar aged children. The level of achievement for all of these children is good and by the time they complete the reception year the overall level of attainment is above that normally expected and about a third will have started on the National Curriculum. These good levels of achievement are primarily due to the consistently good teaching and well-planned curriculum in this class.
6. All pupils with special educational needs achieve well because of the very high quality provision for these pupils. The school thoroughly tracks and analyses the progress of these pupils during the year and staff plan clearly defined programmes of work for each pupil. The very small number of pupils who speak English as an additional language also benefit from this very good provision.

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

Pupils' attitudes are very good and behaviour is **good**. Relationships are **very positive**. Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good, overall**. Attendance is above average and **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- All pupils enjoy school and are eager, enthusiastic learners, good at finding out things for themselves.

- The school is very good at giving all pupils the opportunity to develop as well rounded individuals.
- There are a considerable number of visitors in, days out and residential trips.
- Opportunities for spiritual development are good and the Church has a strong influence here.
- Relationships are very positive and supportive.
- Pupils' attendance at school is consistently high.

## Commentary

7. Pupils enjoy their lessons and are keen to learn. They particularly enjoy working on the computers and finding out things for themselves. This is strongly encouraged, as many wall displays include relevant web sites for pupils to locate. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and the very small number who speak English as an additional language are learning well in a positive, supportive environment, where relationships are warm and friendly. There is a strong work ethic, which pupils respond well to.
8. This is a distinct improvement compared to the previous inspection when most areas relating to pupils' work and behaviour, and the schools' provision for their personal development, were described as satisfactory.
9. Older pupils are good at helping the younger ones (for example, by being reading and ICT partners) and the school actively encourages this. Pupils work together well in lessons yet have a very good capacity for working independently. This is illustrated by some of the Year 6's history project folders, which they completed on their own, revealing great pride taken in their work. Again, this is another improvement, because encouraging pupils to show initiative was a key issue from the previous inspection.
10. Behaviour has improved because the school has taken a firmer line on transgressions and encouraged pupils to think more about the consequences of their actions. This reflects the good provision for pupils' moral and social development. There have been no exclusions for poor behaviour and this is the usual pattern.
11. Opportunities for pupils' cultural and spiritual development are good as well. A particular feature of life here are the very good chances to stay away from home on residential trips. They start from a weekend camp and progress to a week away in France for the oldest ones. Visits out are also a regular feature, and the school uses the neighbouring Ashdown Forest well to support learning. The rich and varied curriculum, special focus weeks such as those for art, and the very good number of clubs and after school activities also make a strong contribution to the pupils' overall development. These activities are very popular with pupils and help form the very good social development for pupils.
12. Staff have recently reviewed the provision for the pupils' spiritual development. For instance, a new policy for spiritual, moral social and cultural policy is shortly to be published and regular services in the picturesque church in the grounds provide pupils with time for thought, reflection and peace, with a strong Christian focus.

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

Authorised absence	Unauthorised absence
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School data	3.8
National data	5.4

School data	0.1
National data	0.4

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

13. Pupils' attendance over the years has been consistently good and above the national average. The most recent figures show this trend continuing. Pupils want to come to school because they enjoy it and their parents ensure they attend regularly, because they value education.

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	214	0	0
White – Irish	1	0	0
White – any other White background	2	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	2	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	1	0	0
Black or Black British – African	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	2	0	0

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

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

The quality of education is **good** with a strong emphasis being placed in the provision of a wide range of learning experiences for all pupils.

### **Teaching and learning**

Teaching is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers display good levels of subject knowledge.
- The specialist teaching of foundation subjects is having a positive impact on the overall achievement of junior pupils.
- Lesson planning is good overall.
- The behaviour of pupils is managed well.
- Procedures for the assessment of pupils' achievements are inconsistent in quality and unsatisfactory overall.
- The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- Teachers use resources well to support pupils' learning.

### **Commentary**

#### ***Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 27 lessons***

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1	6	14	6	0	0	0

*The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.*

14. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. In over three quarters of lessons observed during the inspection it was judged to be good or better with a quarter of

lessons being very good or excellent. The teaching of children in the reception class was consistently good. This consistently good picture is also evident for the youngest infant and older junior pupils.

15. Subject knowledge is good overall. Teachers of reception children and the infant pupils demonstrate good knowledge and understanding of teaching these age groups. On the whole, all teachers teach the basic skills of literacy and numeracy well and the national strategies have been implemented effectively. However, insufficient attention is paid to the teaching of spelling and punctuation. This is restricting standards in writing. The specialist teaching of foundation subjects to junior pupils is having a positive impact on levels of achievement in French, music, design and technology and ICT. This strategy utilises the skills of teachers to the full while providing consistency in the quality of teaching and learning for pupils in these subjects.
16. The quality of teachers' planning is consistently good across the school. Termly planning is stored on the school network and used effectively by class teachers to support their lesson planning. Learning intentions are often made very explicit to the pupils at the start of each lesson as a result of the new headteacher's recent focus on monitoring teaching quality. However, some of these learning intentions are not specific enough to provide clarity about the learning experiences for pupils and are an area for further improvement.
17. Pupils' behaviour is managed well. All teachers use a wide range of strategies to promote positive behaviour in lessons. Teachers of junior pupils make particularly good use of praise to motivate and engage these pupils in their learning. As a result, these pupils apply themselves well and respond very well to opportunities for independent and co-operative learning.
18. The procedures for the assessment of pupils' achievement are inconsistent in quality and unsatisfactory overall. Teachers know their pupils very well but assessment procedures are too ad-hoc in some classes. However, models of very good practice exist for pupils in Year 1 and 5 where the teachers of these pupils have collated very comprehensive information about each pupil in all subjects. The quality of teachers' marking is satisfactory overall but variable in quality. The use of individual targets for pupils in English and mathematics is at an early stage of development. The use of ICT to track pupils achievements is in its infancy and as a result data is not being used effectively to monitor individuals or groups of pupils. The school has already identified the assessment of pupils' achievements as a priority for school improvement.
19. All pupils identified with special educational needs are taught very well. This is achieved through a combination of;
  - good in class support by class teachers and support staff;
  - the very effective teaching of these pupils in small withdrawal groups by learning support assistants;
  - and the excellent teaching of individual pupils by the special needs co-ordinator.This represents a significant improvement on the findings of the previous inspection when the teaching of these pupils was judged to be only satisfactory. Individual programmes of work are provided for all these pupils and procedures for assessing their achievements are exemplary. They provide a very clear picture for both staff and parents alike of the progress of each pupil.
20. Teachers and support staff make good use of resources to support the teaching of key concepts and make learning interesting for pupils. For instance, whiteboards are used effectively to collate pupils' ideas and contributions to class discussions, computers are used to search websites and interactive computer games are utilised very effectively to consolidate the learning of special educational needs pupils.

## The curriculum

The school offers a **good** range of learning opportunities through a balanced and broad curriculum that caters for the needs of all pupils. The curriculum is further enhanced through a **very good** range of opportunities after school and at lunchtime to develop social skills and academic learning. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is **excellent**. The **good** accommodation and resources are used effectively to meet the needs of the pupils.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum meets all statutory requirements and additionally offers a modern foreign language to the oldest pupils.
- Curriculum provision for the most able pupils is inconsistent.
- Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good.
- Arrangements for pupils with special educational needs is excellent, and support assistants make a significant contribution to this.
- There are effective links between subjects, which helps to consolidate learning.
- There is a very good range of extra-curricular activities.
- Provision for personal, social and health education is very good.
- Specialist teaching contributes to good provision in design and technology, ICT, music and French for junior pupils.
- Pupils are well prepared for entry to secondary education.

## Commentary

21. The school offers pupils a wide range of learning experiences to ensure they achieve well. All subjects of the National Curriculum are taught and there has been a good level of improvement in provision since the last inspection, notably in ICT and design and technology, where provision is now good. The school teaches French to pupils in Year 6. This provides them with a good basis for language learning in their secondary school. Learning is reinforced by a residential visit to France. Good links are developed between subjects, using a topic approach, so that pupils use knowledge and skills learned in one subject and apply them in another. A very good example of mathematics across the curriculum is an investigation of Pythagoras' theorem linked to the history topic on Ancient Greeks. Information and Communication Technology skills are also effectively applied in lessons including English, science and art. The use of specialist teachers to teach ICT, design and technology, music and French ensures high quality provision in these subjects for all pupils in the junior classes, and results in above average attainment. Whilst there is good provision overall, not all teachers plan a curriculum which includes sufficient provision for the most able pupils to extend their learning.
22. The children in the reception class benefit from a good range of learning opportunities that develops their knowledge and understanding across all the recommended areas of learning. They take part in a wide range of planned and structured activities and experiences that give them a positive start to their education.
23. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is excellent. This is a significant improvement on the findings of the previous inspection. Both in class support and individual tuition are very effectively organised and very closely linked to the needs of

these pupils. The very small number of pupils with English as an additional language benefit from this high quality provision as and when the need arises.

24. The provision for personal, social and health education is very good, and the high quality and recently revised policy and scheme of work make provision for topics from this area, including citizenship and drugs education, to be taught in timetabled sessions for each class. Some elements are integrated with other subjects; for instance some aspects of health and sex education are covered within science. Other aspects are dealt with effectively by using visiting health professionals. Social skills and a sense of responsibility are fostered in Year 6 pupils by a mentoring scheme by which each pupil is partnered with a reception child, whom they read with regularly.
25. A very good range of worthwhile visits is planned for each class each year. These link with the teaching that takes place in school, and together with visits from outside speakers and teachers, they enhance provision and promote learning. Residential visits promote independence and self-confidence in the older junior classes. A very good range of extra-curricular activities is offered to pupils to extend their knowledge and understanding in a wide variety of subjects. These include competitive sports, musical activities, dance and an ICT club. Parent helpers support several of the after school activities, which are popular and well attended. An active school council has been responsible for initiating the decoration of the toilets and has also lobbied for improvements in the outdoor play provision and healthier school meals. Pupils are well prepared for secondary education, which eases the transfer at age 11.
26. There are sufficient teachers to meet the needs of pupils. They all have at least satisfactory and often good knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach. Support staff are deployed very effectively, and are an asset to the school. Good accommodation and resources include a well-equipped ICT suite and an improved outdoor play area for reception children. Several small rooms and areas for quiet group work are used effectively to aid pupils' learning.

### Care, guidance and support

Arrangements to ensure pupils' care and welfare are **good**. The school provides pupils with a **satisfactory** level of support, advice, and guidance. There is a **good** level of involvement through seeking, valuing and acting upon their views.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are well cared for in a friendly, Christian environment, where relationships are strong.
- High levels of care and support are shown by staff towards pupils with special educational needs.
- Pupils do not receive enough encouragement and guidance about how they can improve their work.
- Pupils' views are increasingly being sought and acted upon, especially through the work of the new school council.

### Commentary



27. There is good care for the welfare of pupils and the school has a friendly, supportive, family feel to it. Part of this care includes a good quality personal, social and health education programme, which is helping pupils become well-rounded individuals. Child protection procedures have improved since the previous inspection and are secure. There is a satisfactory level of health and safety awareness.
28. Very high levels of care are shown by all staff for pupils with special educational needs. The needs and achievements of these pupils are very carefully monitored and the quality of record keeping is exemplary. As a result, these pupils greatly value the high level of care shown and often make significant gains in their learning and personal development.
29. The academic guidance pupils receive, especially through comments teachers write in their books, does not provide them with enough advice on how their work can be improved. The use of targets for pupils is generally limited and therefore a significant proportion of pupils are missing the chance to understand what they need to get better at and how to do it. Targets are used well in a couple of classes however, providing some examples of good practice.
30. The school is now actively seeking the views of pupils. The new school council is developing well and starting to make a difference. Pupils are enthusiastic about it. Already, there have been improvements such as new playground games, with more developments planned.

## Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The partnership with parents is **good**, overall. Community links are **satisfactory** and the relationships with other schools are **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents make a very strong contribution to pupils' learning, both at home and through their involvement in school.
- The new headteacher has made a good start at consulting with parents and is responding positively to their views.
- Communication between home and school is useful and staff provide a warm welcome to parents.
- There are some fruitful links with other schools leading to good working partnerships.

### Commentary

31. The school is a popular choice with parents and almost always oversubscribed. Parents are very committed to the school and very supportive of their child's learning. They provide valuable support at home, supply an impressive amount of practical help, and give good support for school events. Governors who are parents work hard for the school. The successful parents' group raises considerable sums of money which enables the school to make purchases it would otherwise be unable to afford. This means the quality of what the pupils receive is considerably enhanced by parental generosity; for example the considerable contribution made to the implementation of the computer suite. Parents are helping to influence school practices, for example, by contributing towards improving road safety.
32. Consultation processes are developing well. Parents received some good feedback about the recent school survey and the headteacher has already taken some tangible steps as a result, by organising a 'Keeping up with the Children' course for parents.
33. St John's is a friendly place, where day-to-day communication keeps parents fully in the picture. Regular newsletters, termly curriculum leaflets and class notice boards all help make up the good provision. Very good procedures have been put in place to fully involve parents of pupils with special educational needs. Twice yearly reviews include parents and good lines of communication have been established between home and school. A specific notice board provides further information and advice for parents of pupils with special educational needs.
34. The organisation and provision of homework is an area where parents have mixed views. The school has already recognised that the homework needs looking at again and a review is planned in the near future. However, inspectors found the quality of homework to be satisfactory and in line with most other schools.
35. Partnerships with other schools are good. The school benefits from strong sporting links with a local sports college, bringing many exciting opportunities for pupils. There have been visits to a school on the coast to meet with pen pals and participation in dance festivals held by other schools. Links have also been effectively established with a school

in France in preparation for a residential trip there. There is also a new determination from the headteacher to encourage liaison with other primaries and the sharing of staff training events.

36. Community links are satisfactory, overall. Some, such as the established tradition of singing to community members at Christmas, are helping pupils to think of others. As befits a church school, the partnership with St John's church underpins much of what the school does. There are established routines to settle the children in when they enter the reception class and staff make regular visits to local playgroups so children can meet their teachers, beforehand. In return the playgroup children visit the school before they start in the reception class.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership and management of the school are **good**. The headteacher provides **very good** leadership. Other staff with key responsibilities provide **good** leadership in their areas. The governing body carries out its duties **well**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher has a clear vision which she shares well with the staff and governing body.
- The role of some subject co-ordinators has yet to be fully developed.
- The management of special educational needs is excellent.
- The governing body has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.
- Planning for improvement is good.
- Financial management is good and principles of best value are implemented well.

### **Commentary**

37. The newly appointed headteacher provides strong and effective leadership. Since she has been at the school she has already identified key areas for improvement and put in place strategies to bring this about. In a very short space of time she has gained the confidence of staff, parents and governors. She is supported well by the senior management team of the deputy head, who provides a very good model of teaching in Year 6, and the early years co-ordinator, who gives very good leadership in that part of the school. There is good leadership in mathematics, information and communication technology, physical education and personal, social and health education, but other subject co-ordinators have not had the opportunity to monitor provision in their subjects sufficiently to have an impact on teaching and learning.
38. The leadership and management of special educational needs provision are excellent. The part-time coordinator very effectively oversees the provision for these pupils. Staff development is an integral part of this provision and support assistants have become an asset of the school through very effective training.
39. The governing body knows the school well. Its members have a good understanding of the strengths of the school and the areas where it can improve, and they support the headteacher and staff well, becoming fully involved in events at the school as well as in the long term strategic planning. The governing body meets all its legal obligations, which

is an improvement on the last inspection, when some statutory requirements were not met. At the time of the last inspection, there was a large financial deficit. The governors' finance committee keeps very good control of the finances, which are also monitored closely by the headteacher. Although the figures for the latest financial year show a small deficit, this was due to factors beyond the school's control and has been approved by the local education authority. By careful planning the governing body has maintained the good level of support staff which makes an important contribution to pupils' learning. This is an example of the way they have sought best value for expenditure.

40. At the time of the last inspection strategic financial planning was a weakness. It is now good. The school's improvement plan has been reviewed and appropriate priorities and costs identified, which have been linked to budget planning. Subject co-ordinators formulate their own action plans and bid for the funding needed to meet their aims.
41. The management of the school is good. This is an improvement on the last inspection, when it was judged to be 'sound'. The school reviews the data available to it from tests and other assessments to identify areas of weakness, and the headteacher has established a programme of monitoring teaching and learning which is already having a positive effect on standards.

***Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004***

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	445,178
Total expenditure	458,367
Expenditure per pupil	2,112

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	3,189
Balance carried forward to the next	-10,000

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

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

There is **good** provision for children in the reception class.

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

- Good teaching ensures that children make good progress.
- Good planning and assessment ensure that children work at levels that are well matched to their ability and that challenge them.
- There is a good balance between adult-led and child-selected activities.
- New outdoor provision is well designed and equipped, and offers good facilities for outdoor play and physical development.
- There are very good relationships between adults and children and good working relationships between all staff and volunteer helpers working in the reception class.

#### **Commentary**

42. Children start in the reception class in the September before their fifth birthday. The youngest children attend on a part-time mornings only for the first part of the year. Good links with the range of pre-school settings in the local area and good provision for visits to school in the summer before admission ease entry to school. Parents are made to feel very welcome in school, and this helps children to feel secure in the new environment. Relationships between children and adults in school are based on warmth and trust.
43. Most children enter the reception class with levels of attainment, which are above average. A range of challenging and motivating activities is planned across all areas of learning, which offer both structure and choice to the children, and help them to achieve well. Their achievements are carefully monitored, and staff use a detailed system of assessment to help to plan for future learning and development. Consistently good teaching promotes good progress. Children with special educational needs are identified early and monitored by the teacher in consultation with other professionals such as the speech therapist. Curriculum provision is put in place for those with individual needs. The Foundation Stage is well managed by the reception class teacher and there are good working relationships between all who contribute to the work of the foundation stage, including parent volunteers. A significant improvement to the provision since the last inspection is the newly developed outdoor play area, which offers good opportunities for a range of learning including physical development.

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

Provision for personal, social and emotional development is **good**

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

- As a result of high expectations of behaviour, children behave well.
- Children develop independence and learn to make choices because of the range of opportunities for them to do so.

## Commentary

44. Children settle quickly into the routines of school because of good teaching and support. By the time they reach the end of the reception year they are on target to meet or exceed the expectations of the Early Learning Goals. Children come into school willingly at the start of the day, and because of well-established routines and high teacher expectations, they settle quickly to an activity or for registration. They quickly gain confidence in moving round the room and the school, and learn to take turns and share equipment. They behave well and treat resources correctly. As well as a range of adult-directed activities, there are frequent opportunities for children to make choices about what they would like to do, and this promotes independence and confidence. Children show good levels of independence in finding equipment such as scissors or crayons, and most manage their own clothing and footwear when changing for physical education. Some children show a well-developed sense of responsibility and care for others and help each other with buttons, shoe laces, etc.

## COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good provision for the development of speaking and listening skills.
- The emphasis on the teaching of phonics leads to good progress in both reading and writing.

## Commentary

45. Many children enter reception with good speaking skills and a wide vocabulary. They speak in well-structured sentences and respond confidently to other children and adults. The focus on listening skills in the reception class ensures that this aspect develops steadily. Children learn to listen to questions and instructions and respond specifically. They concentrate well when they listen to stories and re-tell them accurately. Teaching in this area of learning is good. Phonic skills are regularly taught, and children make rapid progress in learning letter sounds. A small number of children learn to read before starting school, and the more able and average children quickly become established on the early stages of the reading scheme. By the end of the reception year, all children read from the reading scheme, with the most able being well established on the early stages of the National Curriculum. Children learn to write letters correctly and the more able use their phonic skills to spell new words as they compose captions for their pictures and write accounts of what they have done. The most able write out a known story – ‘Jack and the Beanstalk’ – using several sentences, which include simple punctuation. By the end of the reception year, all children are on target to meet or exceed the expectations of the Early Learning Goals, and many are achieving the standards expected of the early stages of the National Curriculum.

## MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for mathematical development is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good teaching of the basic skills of numeracy and measurement.
- There is good provision for children's mathematical development outside numeracy sessions.

## **Commentary**

46. As a result of good teaching of the basic number skills of counting, adding and subtracting children make good progress with numeracy and by the time they reach Year 1 they meet the expectations of the Early Learning Goals. The more able children exceed expectations and work comfortably within the early levels of the National Curriculum. The learning needs of the most able are met by challenges outside of the numeracy session, for instance working out how many children from the class of 30 should sit either side of the hall if they are to have half on each side. A very able child responded that since one person was absent they would have 15 on one side and 14 on the other. 'That's not exactly half because you can't have half a person!' he added.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- A good range of first-hand experiences are offered which enable children to achieve well.
- Adult and older pupil involvement in activities promotes children's learning.

### **Commentary**

47. Children make good progress and by the time they leave the reception class meet or exceed the expectations of the Early Learning Goals. Teaching is good and makes a strong contribution to the progress made. Children are given a wide range of activities to support their learning. They are confident in using the mouse and keyboard on the computer, and show good skills of 'clicking and dragging' as they compile a face for a giant from a range of features, with the support of their Year 6 mentors. Children act as 'archaeologists' as they search carefully through the sand tray for the cardboard 'bones' of dinosaurs, and with adult guidance, successfully assemble them to create dinosaur skeletons. They have many opportunities to use large and small construction kits and show good skills of making. A digging area outside enables them to investigate the properties of soil and the creatures that live in it.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The outdoor play area offers good opportunities for physical development.
- Children develop hand control skills well because of good adult support.

### **Commentary**

48. Children start school with physical development that is in line with expectations for their age. They make good progress and reach the expectations of the Early Learning Goals by the end of the reception year. In outdoor play they show skill in riding wheeled vehicles and run and jump with confidence. In the hall they show sound balance and control, and awareness of space. They show good manipulative skills when handling equipment such as scissors, and develop correct techniques for holding a pencil or paintbrush because adults demonstrate and model these skills for them.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children have good opportunities to make creative choices.

### **Commentary**



49. Children make good progress in this area of learning and by the end of reception they meet or exceed the expectations of the Early Learning Goals. They enjoy role-play, and groups of three or four respond well to each other when engaging in a self-initiated play about Jack and the Beanstalk. Creative skills are well developed. For instance, children use a variety of materials to make pictures, selecting collage materials, crayon or paint to achieve effects they like. They sing tunefully and make music with percussion instruments, which they name correctly.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision for English is **good** overall.

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

- The good teaching of key skills to the younger pupils.
- Reading is taught effectively across the school with work and texts well matched to ability for all pupils.
- The dedicated efforts of learning support assistants ensure that pupils with special educational needs achieve well.
- Higher attaining pupils who are capable of achieving more, particularly in writing, are not always adequately challenged.
- There is insufficient attention paid to handwriting, spelling and punctuation, which reduces attainment in writing.
- Assessment is under-developed.

#### **Commentary**

50. Pupils' standards in English are above average overall in both infant and junior classes. This judgement is similar to that reported in the previous inspection. Standards in reading are above average by the age of seven, and well above average by the age of 11. Standards in writing are average and standards in speaking and listening are above average throughout the school. Results of national tests indicate that girls attain higher standards in English than boys. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of high quality support from learning support assistants. More able pupils make good progress in reading, although progress in writing is only satisfactory because of a low level of challenge and inconsistent teaching of punctuation, handwriting and spelling.
51. Pupils' reading ability shows that most are working at levels above those expected for their age. The older junior pupils achieve well above expected levels. This is the result of thorough and systematic teaching of phonic skills in the younger classes and additional time given to guided group reading. A Year 6 reader identified as 'lower ability' nevertheless read her book confidently and fluently, and discussed the characters in detail, remarking about one of them, 'To be quite honest, in my opinion, he's a bit of a wimp!' Attitudes to reading of both boys and girls throughout the school are positive, with many pupils saying they are enthusiastic recreational readers and regular users of the public library.
52. Progress in writing is satisfactory across the school. Pupils write for a range of purposes and junior pupils are encouraged to consider the audience they are writing for, which

helps them to write in different styles to suit the purpose and the reader. In the infant and younger junior classes the skills of handwriting and presentation are taught inconsistently, with some pupils finding difficulty in producing a cursive, joined handwriting style because of poor letter formation remaining uncorrected. Pupils use their phonic skills well to help them to spell new words, and show a good level of independence in tackling the unfamiliar. However, in many writing books high frequency words such as 'said' and 'what' are incorrectly spelt, and errors such as 'sadi' (for said) and 'wot' (for what) remain uncorrected over several writing tasks. This consolidates incorrect spelling patterns and reduces the quality of finished written pieces. Punctuation is inconsistently taught, although in some classes it is given a good level of attention and teacher expectation is high. This results in the more able writers in these classes correctly using punctuation features such as speech marks, parenthesis and asides indicated by dashes. In other classes the expectation is lower, and incorrect punctuation is often ignored when books are marked. The more able are not challenged to develop and improve their pieces by the use of more advanced writing devices, and thus their attainment is restricted.

53. Speaking and listening are good, and teachers give pupils a good range of opportunities for discussion and interaction. For instance, a Year 2 lesson included the role-play of an interview with the character of a book, which encouraged pupils to compose carefully structured questions to elicit the required information. A Year 5 lesson included the effective dramatisation of an advertisement the pupils had designed, but drama does not play a significant part in the development of speaking and listening skills across the school.
54. Teaching is satisfactory overall, with lessons observed during the inspection varying between satisfactory to very good. The best teaching is characterised by careful planning that builds upon what pupils have already learned, high expectations, a good pace of working and a good balance of practical and written activities to develop literacy skills. Assessment is inconsistent across the classes, and whilst in some classes it is good, not all teachers have a clear record of what every pupil has achieved. This means that some pupils are given work that does not challenge their ability and promote higher attainment. The reasons for boys' lower attainment have not been fully assessed or analysed by teachers, therefore no specific action is in place to address this situation. Marking often consists simply of a tick or a word of praise, which does not help the pupil to understand how to do even better.
55. Overall, the leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The newly appointed headteacher is acting as subject co-ordinator for English on a temporary basis. She is aware of the need to improve writing skills and the quality and consistency of assessment. A portfolio of assessed work has been compiled, and she has started to investigate boys' lower achievement. The resources for English are good. The library is well stocked with fiction and reference books.

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

56. Pupils use their literacy skills successfully in other subjects. They use their well-developed reading skills for researching history or geography topics, using the library and the Internet independently. Planned opportunities for independent research and application of skills are a positive feature of English planning in the upper junior classes. Throughout the school pupils write up science investigations, and show good application of literacy

skills in their plans and evaluations in design and technology. Skills in ICT are used successfully, particularly in word processing stories and factual writing.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision for mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The standards attained by pupils in Year 6 are well above average.
- Teaching is good overall, although there is some inconsistency, particularly in the marking of pupils' work.
- The subject is led well.
- The school needs to develop further the challenge for higher attaining pupils.

### **Commentary**

57. In the National Curriculum tests in 2003, pupils in Year 2 attained standards which were average. Pupils in Year 6 attained standards which were well above average, but the number attaining a higher level than that expected was average, and well below average when compared to schools where pupils' attainment in Year 2 was similar.
58. The standards attained by pupils in the current Years 2 and 6 are similar to those achieved last year. In Year 2 the proportion of pupils attaining above the expected level is slightly above average, as is the proportion attaining below. In Year 6 the proportion attaining above the expected level is also slightly above average but there are fewer pupils not attaining the expected level. Pupils achieve well and make good progress from Year 2 to Year 6.
59. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers manage pupils well and so pupils maintain their concentration and interest in lessons. Support for less able pupils is particularly good; they often work with a classroom assistant on tasks, which are matched well to their previous attainment. Teachers also make very good use of the resources, which are available to them; for instance, in a lesson with Year 1 pupils, the teacher used puppets as well as range of other equipment to teach pupils to subtract. Most teachers set pupils clear individual targets, with stickers inside their exercise books, but this is not applied consistently throughout the school. The quality of teachers' marking also varies, with some indicating to pupils clearly how they could improve but others not annotating work in the same way.
60. The subject is being led and managed well by the co-ordinator, who has a good understanding of the areas for development. Teaching and learning has been monitored effectively through the observations of lessons and looking at pupils work. A clear action plan has been constructed but as yet the co-ordinator has not had the opportunity to fully address the weaknesses she has identified.
61. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. The quality of teaching, satisfactory at the last inspection, is now good. Standards, above average at the last inspection, are now well above average by the time pupils leave school.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

62. Mathematics is used well in other subjects. A particularly effective example was the way pupils' demonstrated Pythagoras' theorem in their history projects on Ancient Greece. Pupils use graphs, for instance in science, when they record the results of their investigations, or in geography to plot the differences between the temperature in Rhodes and Athens. Numeracy is also reinforced well in information and communication technology lessons.

## SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good overall and best at the end of juniors.
- There are insufficient opportunities planned for the oldest infant pupils to use their thinking skills.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good overall.
- Procedures for the assessment of pupils' progress are unsatisfactory.
- The role of subject co-ordinator is underdeveloped.

### Commentary

63. There were limited opportunities to observe the teaching of science during the inspection. However, evidence from two lessons, the analysis of pupils' work, and discussions with pupils, indicates that standards are well above average overall by the time pupils are 11. This is generally reflected in the 2003 national tests, when nearly all of the pupils in Year 6 achieved at least Level 4 with over a half attaining the higher Level 5. This represents good achievement when compared with schools nationally but below average achievement when compared with similar schools with prior attainment. All seven year olds attained at least the expected level in the 2003 teacher assessments but none of these pupils were assessed at the higher, Level 3. Overall, it can be seen that boys in the juniors do better than girls.
64. Inspection findings confirm that standards are now well above average for 11 year olds and that achievement is good overall. Achievement is, however, best for the older junior pupils where a good emphasis is placed on investigative work. The quality of the work in the oldest pupils' book is of particularly good quality with about a half at an above average standard. Some of these investigations are recorded in a thorough and scientific manner such as those about reversible and irreversible change, filtration and gravity. Such activities provide good opportunities for personal and social development through co-operative activity. However, although most pupils in Year 2 are working at the expected level there is insufficient evidence of these pupils undertaking many practical investigations during the school year. As a consequence there are few pupils working at the higher Level 3 and their ability to apply their thinking skills is limited. This is not the case in Year 1 where a wide range of practical activities are provided for these pupils to develop their scientific thinking.
65. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Teachers plan their lessons effectively and display good levels of subject knowledge. All teachers use questions well to review the pupils' learning and check their level of understanding. Resources such as whiteboards and computers are used effectively to illustrate key teaching points and make lessons interesting. Opportunities for older junior pupils to collect and interpret data are frequently planned for and this in turn further supports the mathematical development of these pupils. Teachers use visits to the local forest, residential trips to the coast and visitors to the school to further enrich the

pupils' learning experiences. Despite the overall good teaching seen in lessons there are significant shortcomings in the procedures for assessing and recording the pupils' achievements across the school. This limits the teachers' ability to match work effectively to the needs of all pupils in their class and track their individual progress overtime. The quality and range of resources are good and the school grounds provide good opportunities for environmental study.

66. The newly appointed headteacher is providing satisfactory leadership and management of the subject. She has already monitored some teaching and learning in the short time that she has been at the school. However, the role of subject co-ordinator has been insufficiently developed in the past and any significant contribution to school evaluation and review has been rather limited.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Achievement is good across the school.
- Provision has been significantly improved.
- Pupils respond very well to the wide range of experiences and opportunities to consolidate their skills.
- The expertise of teachers is good.
- Procedures to assess pupils' achievement are unsatisfactory.
- Leadership and management of the subject are good.

### **Commentary**

67. Achievement across the school is consistently good for all pupils including those with special educational needs. As a result, pupils' standards are average for seven year olds and above averages for 11 year olds. This is a significant improvement on the findings of the previous inspection when standards were judged to be unsatisfactory. Since then, both staff and governors have undertaken a considerable amount of work to improve the quality of overall provision in the school. For instance, a well-equipped computer suite has now been established to enable a full class of pupils to be taught simultaneously. This ensures that all pupils are provided with regular opportunities to develop their skills as seen in a short data handling activity as part of a science topic for pupils in Year 2. In this activity the class teacher demonstrated good levels of subject expertise in using the network and interactive whiteboard to provide all pupils with an opportunity to enter their eye colour into a touch sensitive data-handling package. These pupils responded very well to this exciting medium as they witnessed the tallying of the results instantly into a pictogram. These very positive attitudes to learning are also displayed by pupils in Year 6 as they watch their complex LOGO procedure being translated into a graphic format in front of their eyes.
68. The quality of teaching and learning are good overall with some very good teaching for junior pupils. A very good feature of the school is the specialist teaching of junior pupils. This strategy of using the expertise of one teacher to the full is making a significant contribution to the good achievement of these pupils. Skills are taught in a progressive way and all aspects of the National Curriculum programmes of study are fully covered. High levels of challenge are provided for the oldest pupils with projects that involve the construction of multimedia presentations and imaginative graphic design work. Very good opportunities are also provided for these older junior pupils to develop their skills in simple programming. More able pupils responded particularly well to this activity as they enthusiastically typed in the necessary commands needed to draw quite complex geometric patterns.

69. Even though pupils save their work on the server the assessment of pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory. There are currently no procedures in place to record pupils' progress. This restricts the ability of teachers to monitor pupils' achievements and plan work that is fully matched to the ability of all pupils. This has been recognised by the co-ordinator who has started to compile a portfolio of pupils' work across the school to exemplify the standards being achieved.
70. The co-ordinator is providing good leadership to staff and overall the subject is managed well. A start has been made in the monitoring of standards and good levels of support are provided for staff. The quality and range of equipment and software available are good.

### **Information and communication technology across the curriculum**

71. Teachers throughout the school make good use of ICT to support learning in other subjects. For example, good use is made of graphics software to support the teaching of art, results are gathered and interpreted through the use of spreadsheets and mathematical skills are consolidated through the use of LOGO, an easy to use computer programming language.

### **HUMANITIES**

72. It was only possible to observe one history and part of a geography lesson during the inspection. It is not possible to make an overall judgement on provision in these subjects. Religious education was inspected separately by the local diocese.

#### **History**

73. In the history lesson observed in Year 1, pupils gained a good understanding of some of the differences between life in 1900 and life today and of some of the different ways of finding out about the past, by studying a picture of bath night in 1904 and also by acting out the scene, in a very good mock-up of a scullery with resources provided by the county museum. The teacher used questions, such as 'Why is there an oil lamp?', very well, and also a story about bath time. Pupils also had the opportunity to use the computer to explore a virtual 1900s home. The portfolio of pupils' work shows that they make good progress in developing historical skills as they move through the school, and there is good coverage of the curriculum. Examples of pupils' work from Year 6 on Ancient Greece were of a high standard, both in presentation and content. They showed that pupils have used the internet to research the history of the Olympic games. Pupils throughout the school take part in a wide range of visits, which enrich their learning, such as to Bodiam Castle in Year 1, Fishbourne Roman Palace in Year 3 and Newhaven Fort in Year 5.

#### **Geography**

74. In the brief excerpt from a geography lesson in Year 6, pupils were researching information about countries in the European Union, using maps as well as a computer web-site. They used their mathematical skills well to reduce figures for population in millions to two decimal places. In an English lesson pupils in Year 6 were observed developing their research skills further, using a range of reference books and CD ROMs to find out about rivers. In an information and communication technology lesson in Year 2 pupils used internet sites confidently to find out about a range of seaside locations and compare them with Crowborough. An analysis of the portfolio of pupils' work and

teachers' planning showed that pupils cover the full curriculum and achieve the standards expected for their age. Their understanding is also extended by theme weeks, such as that on South America. The co-ordinator has identified the need to develop systems to assess pupils' work and also to ensure that adequate time is given to the subject.

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

### **Art and design**

Provision in art is **good**

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

- The quality of artwork on display throughout the school is good.
- Sketchbooks are used well throughout the school.
- Techniques are demonstrated effectively.
- The subject knowledge of the co-ordinator is good.
- There are limited opportunities for three-dimensional work.

#### **Commentary**

75. Pupils attain standards that are above expectations at the ages of seven and 11. This confirms that the good standards reported in the last inspection have been maintained. The school provides a well-balanced curriculum that covers all elements of the National Curriculum for art, including study of the work of established artists. All pupils keep a sketchbook in which they record techniques they have used and effects they have achieved. This enables teachers to assess what skills pupils have mastered so they can plan effectively for further progress. Well produced and carefully mounted displays of pupils' artwork enhance the environment of the school.
76. Very good teaching in the lesson observed included direct teaching of skills and techniques such as how to mould a modelling material to create a 3D plaque. This resulted in all pupils, including those with special educational needs, producing work of a good standard and which they were proud. Pupils say they enjoy art and find it interesting.
77. Planning for art is based on national guidelines. The knowledgeable co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership and management and she has begun to identify the range of skills to be developed at each stage. In-service training has taken place to develop work with clay, but 3D work is an area for further development in most classes. Resources for the teaching of art are good and include a wide range of materials. A good supply of examples of the work of established artists is available.

## Design and technology

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good across the school.
- Pupils respond very well to the wide range of experiences and opportunities provided for them to produce products of quality.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good overall.
- Subject co-ordination is not effective.

### Commentary

78. Standards of work are average for seven year olds and above average for those aged 11. This is because teachers plan a wide range of interesting learning experiences throughout the school year. All aspects of learning are covered well and a strong emphasis is placed on pupils producing articles of quality. As a result, the level of achievement is good and a significant improvement on the findings of the previous inspection. The range of activities includes Year 2 pupils investigating mechanisms with cotton reels, pupils in Year 3 designing a healthy sandwich and those in Year 6 designing and making their own slippers. The high quality of these slippers effectively exemplifies the above average standards being achieved. Overall, pupils respond very well to the wide range of experiences and opportunities provided for them to produce products of quality. These findings represent good improvement since the previous inspection when progress was judged to be unsatisfactory and standards below average.
79. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Units of work are planned effectively and the concepts of designing, making and evaluation are clearly evident in the tasks that are undertaken. Specialist teaching is making a good contribution to pupil achievement and standards overall in the juniors. A satisfactory range of tools are stored effectively around the school and good displays celebrate the pupils' achievements. Any future development of the subject is hampered by the absence of a co-ordinator.

## Music

Provision in music is **good** overall.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in singing.
- The quality of learning in music is good overall.
- Accommodation and resources are very good.
- Good quality individual tuition is making a strong contribution to pupils' achievement.

### Commentary

80. It was only possible to observe one lesson for pupils in Year 6. Standards are average overall. They are above average in singing where pupils achieve well.
81. No overall judgement can be made on teaching but the quality of learning in music is good overall. However in the one lesson seen, the teacher's good subject knowledge ensured that singing activities were led well with a good emphasis on clear diction, good tempo and controlled dynamics. All these Year 6 pupils sung with great enthusiasm, responding very well to the direction of the teacher. The follow-up activities provided some useful opportunities for the composition of some complex rhythms using unturned percussion instruments where these pupils demonstrated their ability to read a simple graphic notation. The quality of



accommodation and resources is very good including a dedicated performing arts room and a comprehensive range of tuned and untuned instruments. About a third of pupils learn to play an instrument while at the school. The quality of this individual tuition is good and makes a strong contribution to pupil achievement overall. A good range of activities take place outside of lessons including a regular lunchtime choir club with over 40 members, visiting musicians and ensembles and attendance at music festivals and concerts.

82. The subject co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership and management of the subject. Some monitoring of standards has been undertaken but as yet there are no procedures for assessing pupils' achievement.

## **Physical education**

Provision for physical education is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is a very good range of clubs and other activities.
- The subject is led and managed well.
- The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection.

### **Commentary**

83. It was possible to see only two lessons during the inspection, one of gymnastics in Year 2 and one of games in Year 4. Extra-curricular clubs were also observed.
84. In the lessons pupils achieved the standards expected for their age. In Year 2 they developed a short sequence of a roll, jump and balance. The teacher herself provided a good demonstration and also used good examples by pupils of all levels of ability to evaluate. In Year 4 pupils developed their skills with the tennis racquet, helped by the expertise of a professional coach. There was also a good supply of good quality racquets and balls, which gave all pupils the opportunity to practise their skills. From the limited evidence of the inspection, the overall quality of teaching is good; this is an improvement on the last inspection, when several unsatisfactory lessons were observed.
85. There is good provision for swimming. Pupils have regular lessons from Years 2 to 5; as a consequence, nearly all pupils learn to swim competently. There are opportunities for pupils to take a part in an inter-school gala, as well as the school's own. There is also inter-school competition in many sports including football, rugby and cross-country, as well as a wide range of extra-curricular clubs and activities. During the inspection about 60 pupils were observed taking part in an athletics club, during which they were provided with good coaching in events such as the long jump. Expertise from outside the school is used in judo, football and dance clubs.
86. The co-ordinator, working with the previous co-ordinator, provides good leadership and manages the subject well, not least in organising the very wide range of out of school activities, in which other staff and parents support them willingly. They also ensure that pupils who are talented have the opportunity to progress further outside school, for instance by taking part in a national gymnastics competition or joining a swimming club.

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

87. The school places a very good emphasis on pupils' personal development but it was not possible to observe any lessons in this aspect of pupils' learning during the inspection. The programme for personal, social and health education is good and includes work on diet, health, sex, drugs and personal safety. This programme helps pupils gain confidence, interact successfully with other people and know how to have a healthy lifestyle. Social skills and a sense of responsibility are fostered in Year 6 pupils through a reading mentoring scheme with reception children.
  
88. The newly formed school council is already working well and is developing a good sense of citizenship. All pupils have the opportunity to contribute their views in class to their representatives and through the newly implemented pupils' consultation procedures.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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

