

# INSPECTION REPORT

**ST. JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC COMBINED SCHOOL**

Poole

LEA area: Poole

Unique reference number: 113831

Headteacher: Mrs M. Jackson

Lead inspector: Mrs K. Rawson

Dates of inspection: 24<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> May 2004

Inspection number: 257737

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

© Crown copyright 2004

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Combined
School category:	Voluntary aided <sup>1</sup>
Age range of pupils:	4 to 12 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	353
School address:	Newlyn Way Parkstone Poole Dorset
Postcode:	BH12 4EA
Telephone number:	01202 741932
Fax number:	01202 710593
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Carol Gregory

Date of previous June 1998  
inspection:

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St Joseph's Catholic Combined School provides for 353 pupils aged 4 to 12. There are 183 boys and 170 girls on roll. Few pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds. Twenty pupils have English as their second language. Pupils' standard of attainment on entry to the reception classes is broadly average and the percentage of pupils who take free school meals is under 5 per cent, which is below average. Four pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Need and the overall proportion of pupils with special educational needs is above average. A significant number of pupils leave and enter the school between Years 1 and 7. Over the past year the school has had to manage the absence of the deputy headteacher. Two teachers have been working on supply contract for almost the full year.

---

<sup>1</sup> Because St Joseph's is a voluntary aided Roman Catholic school the inspection of religious education and collective worship is carried out under Section 23 of the Schools Inspections Act 1996 (Denominational Education) by the inspector approved by the diocese and appointed by the governing body.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21534	Kate Rawson	Lead inspector	Information and communication technology Art and design Music
9614	Carolyn Webb	Lay inspector	
22178	Kate Robertson	Team inspector	English Geography History Special educational needs English as an additional language
32142	Beryl Richmond	Team inspector	Mathematics Design and technology Physical education French
32106	John Zealander	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Science
3162	Philip O'Neill	Team inspector	Personal, social and health education

The inspection contractor was:

Altecq Education Ltd  
102 Bath Road  
Cheltenham  
Gloucestershire  
GL53 7JX

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be made initially to the contractor. The procedures are set out in the leaflet 'Complaining about Ofsted Inspections', which is available from Ofsted Publications Centre (telephone 07002 637833) or Ofsted's website ([www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

## **REPORT CONTENTS**

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS</b>	
<b>STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS</b>	<b>8</b>
Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
<b>QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>10</b>
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
<b>LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE</b>	
<b>SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2 AND IN YEAR 7</b>	
<b>PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS</b>	<b>27</b>

## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**The school provides a satisfactory quality of education** and gives satisfactory value for money. Teaching is satisfactory overall and pupils make satisfactory progress, reaching average standards in most subjects by the time they leave the school at the end of Year 7. The school is viewed highly by its pupils and their parents.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- the leadership of the headteacher in establishing a very good ethos;
- standards in ICT in the whole school, and in science and mathematics in Year 6 are not high enough;
- the pupils' very good behaviour and attitudes arising out of very good relationships, which create an effective environment for learning;
- effective teaching in Year 7, based on very good assessment, which ensures that the oldest pupils achieve well;
- the use of assessment and target setting in Years 1 to 6 is unsatisfactory. Together with the absence of a coherent overview of the curriculum, this is a factor in pupils not achieving consistently through the school;
- curriculum leaders do not have enough impact on standards because their monitoring of pupils' achievements is not rigorous enough;
- very good links with parents and the community, which enhance pupils' learning;
- the very good number of clubs and extra activities.

The school has made satisfactory progress overall since the last inspection. Teaching has improved. The school now has a very good ethos based on very good behaviour management. Standards in science have improved in Year 7 and pupils in Years 3 to 6 make better progress in English. Satisfactory action has been taken to improve planning and resources in ICT and standards have improved, although they remain below average. Standards for the pupils in Year 6 in mathematics and in science have not kept pace with the national trend of improvement since the last inspection. Measures taken this past year have had a positive impact, but the school recognises that further work is needed to ensure all standards are at least at the average level.

### 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	C	B	C
Mathematics	D	D	E	E*
Science	C	E	E	E*

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average*

*Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals*

**Overall, pupils achieve satisfactorily.** Pupils in Year 7 achieve well, as do pupils with special educational needs. The work seen during the inspection indicates that:

- children in the reception classes are on course to meet the national standards (the early learning goals) in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language

and literacy and in mathematical development, and to exceed the levels expected in knowledge and understanding of the world, and creative and physical development;

- by the end of Year 2 pupils reach standards which are above average in mathematics and average in English and science;
- by the end of Year 6 pupils reach standards that are average in English but well below average in mathematics and science;
- by the end of Year 7 pupils have made very good progress and have achieved well. They reach above average standards in English, and average standards in mathematics and science. Standards in ICT are below those expected.

The school identified that pupils' achievement in Years 3 to 6 was inconsistent last year and the action it took has resulted in pupils making good progress in Year 6, although overall their standards remain low because too few attain above-average standards. The table above shows that the school did not do well in national tests compared with similar schools but the high proportion of pupils who join and leave the school other than at the normal times, together with above average numbers of pupils with special educational needs, make statistical comparisons less reliable.

**Pupils' personal development is very good.** Behaviour is very good and is a significant strength of the school. Pupils are punctual and their attendance is good. **Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good and cultural development is satisfactory.** The school's very good ethos and constant promotion of Christian values of care, courtesy and respect create a harmonious community.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**Overall, the school provides a satisfactory quality of education** with some good features. **Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall.** Teaching is particularly effective in Year 7 so that pupils make good progress. The exception is in ICT where teaching is unsatisfactory and pupils do not reach the standards of which they are capable. Small group teaching in Year 6 this past year has been successful in improving the pupils' progress over the year. Although some good practice exists, there are still weaknesses in the use of assessment and target setting to ensure that all pupils are properly challenged. Teachers are supported well by teaching assistants and by the good support for those pupils with special educational needs. The curriculum is satisfactory but some teachers do not ensure that the activities they choose for pupils always allow them to make the progress they should. Care and support for pupils are very good. Pupils are actively involved in decision-making through the school council. Links with parents and the community are very good.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management are satisfactory overall.** The positive leadership of the headteacher has been very influential in achieving very good standards of behaviour based on very good relationships. The day-to-day work of the school, including the management of finance and of the extensive building works over the past six years, is organised well. Management for the inclusion of all pupils is particularly successful and ensures the school is a supportive, very well-ordered and happy community. The school's leadership is clearly committed to improving standards, but it does not always focus enough on improving pupils' achievements. The developing senior management team has an insufficient overview of the curriculum and assessment. Governance is satisfactory.

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

Parents are very positive about the school. Parents are well informed about how their children are doing. Most pupils say they are pleased with their achievements and there is always someone to go to when they need help. Some believe that lessons could be more interesting and fun.

### **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- raise standards in science and mathematics in Years 3 to 6, and in ICT in the whole school;
- give greater emphasis to monitoring the progress pupils make and act on what is found out;
- develop teachers' understanding of assessment for learning and ensure pupils of all abilities are offered consistently challenging targets through the school.



## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

By the time they leave the school, pupils' achievement and standards are **satisfactory** overall. Standards in Year 7 are average in science and mathematics and above average in English.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils show good achievement in Year 7 and attain average standards.
- Standards in mathematics and science by the end of Year 6 are not high enough.
- Standards in ICT have improved since the last inspection but standards are still below average.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well.

#### Commentary

1. From an average starting point, the children in the reception classes reach the expected standards for their ages in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and in mathematical development, and exceed the levels expected in knowledge and understanding of the world, and creative and physical development. Achievement is satisfactory.
2. In **Years 1 and 2**, pupils do well in mathematics and reach above average standards by the time they are seven. In science and English, their achievement is satisfactory and they attain average standards. As the table below indicates, inspection judgements are similar to the school's results in last year's national tests for seven-year-olds. Improvements in test results have been broadly in line with the national trend. Pupils do not do as well in tests as those in similar schools. Standards in science are average. This marks a very good improvement from last year when teachers' assessments indicated that standards were well below average. Weaknesses identified in investigative science are being successfully overcome.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	15.9 (15.8)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	15.8 (14.4)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	16.8 (16.7)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 36 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

3. In **Years 3 to 6** standards in English are average, but in mathematics and science standards are well below average. The progress made in Years 1 and 2 in these subjects has not been built upon and improvement has not kept pace with the national trend over the past few years. Recent test results show the same picture as the inspection judgments in mathematics and science, although in English last year pupils performed very well indeed. This is partly due to differences in year groups and in mobility - high numbers of pupils leave and enter the school between Years 3 and 6. However, this is not the full story. The school has good tracking in place and this shows dips in performance

previously in Years 3 and 5, which has led to uneven progress and underachievement in the past. The school has taken remedial action over two years to address first English and now, mathematics. Inspectors found that, while this year pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall, they could do still better. English books and teachers' mark books in Years 3 to 6 show that not all teachers ensure they accurately assess pupils and then challenge them to improve. Work seen in their science books shows that pupils do not make sufficient progress in investigation in particular. This is due to teachers not planning well for this aspect of science. The school has taken significant action to put right problems identified in the teaching of mathematics and pupils are starting to make good progress, as seen in the work of pupils in Years 5, 6 and 7. Unfortunately, the focus on mathematics has meant less focus on English and standards in English are lower than they were last year. Nevertheless, Year 6 pupils are proud of their achievements and appreciate the ways in which they have been guided to succeed in the tests.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.9 (27.2)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	24.6 (26.4)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	27.2 (26.8)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 40 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

4. In **Year 7**, pupils' achievement is good in English, mathematics and science as a result of effective and challenging teaching. As a result, they make good progress. They attain average standards in mathematics and science and above average standards in English. Pupils in Year 7 work hard and are pleased with their results.
5. Standards are very slowly rising in ICT and pupils attain satisfactory standards in using ICT to communicate by the end of Year 7. However, the pace of improvement is too slow and standards remain unsatisfactory overall because the pupils do not demonstrate the full range of capability expected for their age. This is because of weaknesses in teachers' subject knowledge and in their assessment and planning. Standards and achievement in all other subjects inspected in depth are average except in music where achievement is good.
6. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well and, by the end of Year 7, achievement is good in relation to their prior attainment. Their progress is checked against individual education plans that contain a manageable number of targets for literacy, numeracy and behaviour that are measurable so that pupils, parents and teachers can see how much progress has been made. Pupils also receive good support from teaching assistants, which enables them to make good progress. Pupils with English as an additional language are supported well by their teachers and achieve in line with their peers.

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

Pupils' have **very good** attitudes towards their school and behaviour is **very good**. Pupils' personal development is **very good**. Attendance is **good**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are very good.
- Personal development is very good.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good.

## Commentary

7. Pupils are very proud of their school. They arrive on or before time in the morning and swiftly settle to the first activities. The school has very effective strategies to promote and manage behaviour. There have been good improvements since the last inspection, when behaviour was identified as needing action. Pupils' behaviour improves as they progress through the school and is very good overall in the playground, assemblies and in class. Pupils are very polite and try hard to please their teachers. Their behaviour only slips when the task is too easy or the lesson uninteresting or lacking in challenge, for example in games lessons when the teachers' planning does not follow the national guidelines. Pupils value the rewards they receive for their attitudes, good work and behaviour and are pleased to celebrate these with their peers in assemblies. They find the sanctions given are fair.
8. Pupils' personal development is now very good. Relishing every opportunity to take responsibility, they carry out their allotted tasks very well. Every week house captains eagerly collect the house points although they have few other duties. Membership of the school council is regarded as important and pupils from Year 3 upwards mount serious democratic election campaigns, supported by their 'agents', to demonstrate why they would be the best person to represent their class.
9. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development has improved since the last report and is now very good. Through assemblies, visiting speakers and opportunities planned in some lessons pupils' spiritual awareness is very well promoted. As a result of the strong Christian values permeating school life, pupils develop mature and caring attitudes by the time they leave. All, whatever their difficulties, are well integrated and included in activities.
10. Pupils are interested in their own and other religions. Educational visits and visitors to the school enhance their knowledge and experience of other cultures and their traditions. Whilst their understanding of their own culture is good, pupils' understanding of life in a multi-cultural society is satisfactory.

## Exclusions

11. There have been no exclusions.

## Attendance

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

Authorised absence	
School data:	4.8
National data:	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data:	0.2
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 school provides a **satisfactory** quality of education for its pupils, with some good features.

### Teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching and learning is **satisfactory**. It is good in Year 7 and satisfactory from reception to Year 6. The use of assessment is **unsatisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers' expectations and challenge for all pupils in Year 7 are often very good resulting in good achievement and good progress.
- The use of assessment to ensure all pupils make consistent progress is unsatisfactory in Years 1 to 6.
- Teaching in science and ICT in Years 1 to 6 is not always sufficiently focused on what pupils need to learn to make good progress in all areas of these subjects.
- There is good inclusion of, and support for, pupils who have special educational needs.
- Very good relationships and teachers' good management skills resulting in very good attitudes and behaviour ensure that there is a positive climate for learning.

## Commentary

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 39 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	4 (10%)	17 (44%)	15 (38%)	3 (8%)	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.*

12. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. During the inspection, teaching in lessons ranged from unsatisfactory to very good. In most subjects, teaching is satisfactory. The exceptions are in music, where the teaching is good, and in ICT where teaching is unsatisfactory. This is an improvement since the last inspection because there are fewer unsatisfactory lessons and more of the teaching is good or better. Where lessons are unsatisfactory the main issues are in teachers not planning and preparing well enough to ensure pupils make consistent progress.
13. Teaching in Year 7 is often good and sometimes very good. The strengths lie in the teachers' very good use of assessment, their very good planning and very good subject knowledge, for example, in French and in music. Their high expectations for the quality and quantity of pupils' work leads to very good pace and productivity in lessons. Pupils also benefit from work in smaller groups. As a result of this good teaching, pupils in Year 7 make rapid gains in their learning and their achievement is good. The teachers' high expectations of them as learners also means their personal development is very strong so that by the time they leave the school they work very well individually and collaboratively. They are very well-prepared for the next stage of their education.
14. The school has established a good system of tracking pupils' performance in tests each year, although in the past this has not led to sufficient analysis and challenge. Satisfactory use is now made of the information from diagnosing pupils' responses in tests. The use of assessment in Year 7 is very good and in the foundation stage it is good. However, not all teachers in Years 1 to 6 especially make enough use of the information they get from marking and daily assessment to move the pupils on in their learning quickly enough. Pupils' work is regularly marked but the quality of marking is variable. It is most effective in those classes where thoughtful comments help the pupils to understand what they know and what they need to improve. In a few classes day-to-day assessment is used well to modify planned activities so that they better meet the needs of the pupils. Assessment in mathematics has improved this past year.
15. Too many teachers confuse recording assessment with recording experience so that their assessment records show what pupils have done and do not help teachers identify weaknesses in pupils' skills or understanding. Part of the problem stems from teachers' lack of subject knowledge, particularly in science and in ICT. Teachers do not sufficiently focus on how well the pupils are doing, matched to the National Curriculum levels of attainment. This means that when teachers plan what the pupils are going to do they do not identify how the task will challenge pupils and help them make good progress in the subject. This is one of the reasons why standards have remained stubbornly low, in science in particular, in Years 3 to 6. It has also led to the low standards in ICT in Years 1 to 7. There has been action to address similar weaknesses in mathematics and standards are improving. In the absence of the deputy, the school has not delegated responsibility for planning and assessment to a senior member of staff.

16. Teachers throughout the school successfully promote inclusion and equality of opportunity. They value the contributions of the pupils. Relationships within the classrooms are very good. Most teaching assistants are deployed well and work effectively alongside the teachers in supporting the inclusion of all pupils in classroom activities. The learning support assistants who are specifically linked to pupils with special educational needs, ensure these pupils make good progress. They competently reinforce pupils' learning, manage well those with behavioural difficulties and ensure all make good progress towards their individual targets.
17. At the time of the last inspection teaching was satisfactory overall but a key issue for the school was to address the problem of managing pupils' behaviour. Now, behaviour in and around the school is very good. The headteacher has been particularly influential in creating a calm and purposeful environment and has been supported well in this by governors and most staff. Most teachers manage the pupils very well by insisting on very good standards of behaviour, and their consistent use of rewards results in pupils being attentive and very well behaved.

## **The curriculum**

The curriculum is **satisfactory**. Enrichment activities are **very good**. Accommodation is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The use of numeracy and ICT skills in other subjects is unsatisfactory.
- There is very good provision for extra-curricular clubs and activities.
- There are a good number of support assistants, who are used well and have a positive impact on pupils' learning.

### **Commentary**

18. The statutory curriculum is in place. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and the planning for them has improved since the last inspection. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Planning is good and concentrates on what pupils need to learn next to make good progress. All the areas of learning are given adequate time and attention and there is a good balance between whole-class and group activities. Except for ICT, all subjects are adequately covered in Years 1 to 7. ICT was identified for improvement in the last inspection. The school has now got a scheme of work but teachers' lack of understanding and use of assessment means that the development of pupils' capability in all areas of the subject is not secure. Pupils have experiences in all aspects of ICT but, due to the lack of assessment matched to the levels of attainment, do not uniformly make progress in all skills. Work in investigation in science in Year 7 and in Years 1 and 2 has improved noticeably and pupils in Year 5 also show good understanding of scientific method, but there are still weaknesses in this aspect of science in Years 3 and 4 particularly.
19. The staffing changes at senior management level have had a significant impact but the new team are still developing their role. There is not a clear overview of how all subjects are planned and taught through the school and so the rigorous use, development and progression of cross-curricular skills is missing. The curriculum in Years 3 to 6 has placed a strong emphasis on the teaching of literacy and numeracy over the past two years to raise standards in these subjects. The school has not sufficiently explored the possibilities

of teaching mathematics through other subjects, such as science and design and technology. The use of literacy in other subjects is developing and is at its best in Years 6 and 7. Nevertheless, this wider and more interesting curriculum is not being used as well as it could be to support teaching and learning and the pupils' view is that lessons are not as interesting as they might be.

20. The school makes very good efforts to enrich the curriculum through after-school clubs and activities out of school hours. Additionally, the school plans a good range of visits and visitors, and the school choir contributes to local events. These activities make a valuable contribution to pupils' personal development. Support assistants are well deployed in all activities to help those pupils with special educational needs. The number of support staff is good, they have a positive impact on pupils' learning and they are used well in almost all lessons.

## Care, guidance and support

The school's arrangements for pupils' welfare, health and safety are **very good**. Systems to consult pupils are **good**, and they value the **good** support, advice and guidance they receive.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Support for pupils with special educational or other needs is very good.
- Pastoral care is very good.
- Very good procedures are followed when child protection issues arise.
- Pupils' personal development is not systematically recorded.

### Commentary

21. Health and safety are high priorities for the school, procedures are very good and the school has ensured that the current building works do not impinge on pupils' education. Trained personnel are always on site to administer first aid, although occasionally unqualified staff deal with minor incidents, and not all are recorded. Arrangements for child protection are very good, and teaching staff know what to do if they have concerns. The school is aware of the new legislation and has taken steps to comply with this.
22. Pupils are pleased that through the school council they have a 'voice' in school decisions, and that they are consulted through questionnaires. All are confident that if they have concerns these will be dealt with swiftly and efficiently as a result of mutual respect and the very good relationships they enjoy with adults. Teaching staff know pupils and their circumstances very well but only record their personal development in reception. Lack of formal recording makes monitoring difficult. Pupils in Year 7 understand what they have to do to improve their work. They value the comments made in class and on their written work. The inconsistent use of assessment to help all pupils achieve consistently well in all lessons is an issue for the school.
23. Pupils with special educational or other needs are very well integrated with and supported by their peers and the school's provision for them. The pupils who speak English as an additional language are very well integrated and supported and make good progress in developing their language skills. Induction arrangements for reception pupils are satisfactory, and pupils arriving at other times during the school year are very pleased with the welcome they receive.

## Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Relationships with parents are **very good**. Links with the community and parish are **very good**. Links with other schools are **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides very good information for all parents.
- Arrangements for consulting parents are very good.
- The very good community links contribute well to pupils' understanding of the world.

### Commentary

24. The school has maintained the very good links with parents reported at the time of the last inspection. They are very pleased with the Catholic values promoted and share the school's aims and ambitions for their children, demonstrating their strong support through their very good attendance at meetings and the assistance they give their children at



home. Many help regularly in school. The parent, teacher and friends association works hard to provide successful fun and fund-raising events, providing additional funds as well as much needed resources. Parents are very well informed about school events and their children's progress through regular news and other letters as well as the school prospectus and governors' annual report. Pupils' annual reports contain targets to help them improve and details of their individual achievements. Parents know they can approach staff at other times if they need information or have concerns and friendly office staff are always on hand to help. Those whose children have special educational or other needs are very well-informed and are invited to discuss individual education plans and their reviews.

25. Close links with the parish include regular celebration of mass at school, which parishioners as well as parents attend, making this a real community event. Pupils take part in church and community events, for example, they act as readers and altar servers in church. They enjoy the Lighthouse Theatre events, shared with those from other schools. Members of the local community talk to pupils about their war and other experiences, new mothers bring their babies and visitors from the Ambulance Service, Automobile Association and the school nurse amongst others all contribute to the good community involvement established. The choir sing carols at a local supermarket and, by the invitation of the Mayor, at the Christmas lighting up ceremony at the civic centre. Pupils gain knowledge of the world outside school from the above, which serves them in very good stead for life at their secondary schools.
26. Links with other schools are satisfactory. Within the local Catholic cluster of schools useful information is exchanged, and the two headteachers act as mentors to each other. St. Joseph's has established very productive links with a local special school, and those with St. Edward's ensure good curriculum liaison and easy transition.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are **satisfactory** overall. The leadership of the headteacher is **good**. Governance is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher has taken good action to establish a very good climate for learning.
- Management is not secure because there is no coherent overview of curriculum planning and assessment.
- Monitoring of pupils' learning and taking effective action lacks rigour.
- Governors do not sufficiently challenge the management teams so that development planning is properly focussed on the key issue of raising standards.
- Leadership and management for special educational needs are very good.
- Financial management is very good.

### **Commentary**

27. The headteacher has a clear view of the relative strengths and weaknesses in the school. She has worked effectively on strategies to create a very good ethos based on very good relationships and high standards of pupils' behaviour. She has successfully managed extensive improvements to the building. She has put into place measures to secure improvements in standards, particularly in science and mathematics, and these are beginning to have an impact.

28. The headteacher has led improvements in English and wants to ensure that the curriculum offered to pupils provides secure and coherent links across all subjects. There have been recent changes to the senior management team due to the long-term absence of the deputy headteacher. Although the newly constituted senior management team shares the headteacher's aspirations, it is still developing its role. No-one has designated responsibility for the oversight of the whole curriculum. The school is aware of the need to strengthen the impact that subject leaders have on teaching and learning in their subjects. Action has already been taken in ICT and science with some positive improvements. Performance management is used effectively to support the professional development of teachers and includes regular monitoring of teaching and learning. This is linked well to the priorities in the school's plan for development and improvement. Planning for school improvement has included regular reviews of progress but these evaluations have not been sufficiently analytical in the past. There is insufficient rigour in evaluating the impact of the actions taken upon the pupils' progress and achievements. There is satisfactory monitoring through lesson observations and through tracking pupils' performance year on year. However, the process of analysing the outcomes of monitoring and then taking effective action to make improvements is not yet sufficiently rigorous.
29. The governing body fulfils its statutory duties satisfactorily and has made good efforts to ensure that the school caters for all pupils successfully. It has a clear understanding of the relative strengths and weaknesses of the school, which it has built up through reports from the headteacher and other teachers. Governors are supportive but their role in challenging the management team is underdeveloped. The governing body has not fully developed an effective strategic plan that has a close focus on key priorities.
30. Leadership and management of the special educational needs co-ordinator are both very good with the result that pupils with special educational needs, including some with behaviour management difficulties, are fully included in the life of the school. She uses her time well to keep records on pupils up-to-date and ensure that support staff are well informed. She is proactive in arranging training courses. In this way the needs of these pupils are well identified and well met and the progress made by these pupils is good. Teaching assistants play a significant role in supporting groups and some individual pupils in many classes. They are included in the planning of work and play a part in monitoring the responses of these pupils to teaching within lessons, which is good.
31. The school's arrangements for financial management and control are very good. Day to day spending is controlled effectively and administrative staff work well with the headteacher to ensure that the budget is tightly controlled. The school applies the principles of best value effectively.

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

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	809,850	Balance from previous year	39,184
Total expenditure	825,328	Balance carried forward	23,706
Expenditure per pupil	2,435		



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

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

32. **Provision for the Foundation Stage is satisfactory.** The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in most areas and good in creative and physical development. Children's achievement is satisfactory overall, with most children meeting the levels expected in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and in mathematical development, and exceeding the levels expected in knowledge and understanding of the world, and creative and physical development. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Since the last inspection the school has successfully adopted the new national strategies for the Foundation Stage.
33. Relationships are good between the children, parents and teachers. The Foundation Stage benefits from the good teamwork of the teachers and teaching assistants. Planning is good and all areas of learning are approached imaginatively. Day-to-day monitoring ensures that teaching is lively and stimulating. The assessment arrangements are good and begin as soon as children start school. Staff share their observations throughout the day, noting children's progress and deciding the next steps.

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

Provision for personal, social and emotional development is **satisfactory**.

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

- Adults establish warm relationships with children.
- Well structured opportunities help to develop the children's social interaction and independence.

#### **Commentary**

34. Most children are on target to reach the expected goals by the end of the reception year. Teaching is satisfactory. Children work as a class with their teacher for part of each session. This helps them to learn the conventions of the classroom, like not calling out, taking turns to speak and not interrupting anyone else. Teaching assistants provide good support. Learning is good in the role-play area. Adults intervene appropriately, providing very good models for behaviour and language. Children work and play alongside one another happily and naturally, behaving very well even when not under the direct supervision of an adult.
35. Children are encouraged to collect and replace resources and to tidy up after activities, which they do successfully. They know the routines of washing their hands after messy activities and do this naturally and responsibly. They respond well to opportunities to develop responsibility and the emphasis that the school places on social development ensures that all children make good progress in developing their social skills.

### **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils are given good opportunities to develop their skills in speaking and listening.

### **Commentary**

36. Teaching is satisfactory and children make satisfactory progress. Most children come into the school with average literacy skills and most are on target to reach the expected goals by the end of the reception year. Staff in the reception classes talk to children about what they are doing to develop their vocabulary. They encourage the children to explore the use of language for themselves and this results in them making good attempts with writing, keen to take risks with words and free from fear of making errors. Expressive language is developed satisfactorily through story and conversation, and children are encouraged to use Standard English through the gentle correction of mistakes they make.
37. Stories are read every day and children are helped to develop a love of books by the expressive way that adults interpret them, ask questions and relate the content to children's experiences. Children are encouraged to respond and show good expression and empathy with character. Working with small groups, the teachers and teaching assistants encourage the children to explore the meaning of text and read together, building effectively on their knowledge before giving them the skills needed to learn more.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- A good level of practical work helps children to practice number work in a variety of settings.

### **Commentary**

38. Most children are on target to reach the expected goals by the end of the reception year. Children respond well to the effective teaching and make good progress in mathematical development, which is put into everyday contexts. They frequently sing counting songs like "the wobbly bike" to reinforce the notion of addition and subtraction. They play with money in the shop and reinforce number bonds through practical activities.
39. Lots of prompts around the rooms support the development of numeracy and contribute well to children's achievement. Calendars, birthday dates and number lines in words, counters and numerals are attractively displayed. Charts support work on shape and space. Teachers plan good opportunities for the children to play with sand, water, construction kits, jigsaws and various shapes. Whenever possible, staff work alongside them, introducing mathematical vocabulary and assessing the extent to which the children's learning is progressing.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children develop good skills in ICT

### **Commentary**

40. By the end of the reception year, most children exceed the expected goals. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers plan good opportunities to develop children's skills in ICT, which means that children achieve well and attain good standards, building successfully on what they already know when they start school. They show understanding of certain functions such as "fill" to support their work and their control of the mouse is good. Teachers work well to promote links with other subjects and to develop the children's curiosity and support their early investigative and problem-solving skills. Good use is made of the indoor space to provide activities that stimulate them. They talk accurately and fluently about their world and experience. Construction kits enable children to manipulate objects, whilst sorting games introduce them to categorising things using specific criteria, such as colour, shape and size.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in physical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children use a good range of apparatus and make good progress.
- Good practical activities in the classroom support the good development of children's manipulative skills.

### **Commentary**

41. Teaching is good and children reach good standards, most exceeding the expectations by the end of the reception year. Adults model skills and movements in physical education lessons and encourage children to extend their skills. When given challenges, children show very good co-ordination skills in throwing and catching, and work well collaboratively in groups and pairs. They are encouraged to talk about what they have done and how well they did it. Children have good opportunities to develop physical skills in art and craft. They use scissors well and their drawing, colouring and sticking show good co-ordination. A range of climbing apparatus is available in the hall but is not available within the outdoor play area. The school has a range of wheeled toy vehicles but the limited covered area outside restricts the opportunities for children to use outdoor equipment in wet weather.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in creative development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Careful guidance by teachers enable children to develop good skills.
- Carefully focused activities give children good opportunities to work collaboratively.

### **Commentary**

42. Teaching is good and children achieve well reaching standards above the expected level. Children experience a good range of activities that develop their skills in painting and drawing. In one lesson seen, a group of children were carefully mixing colours to paint the pasta that comprised the scale coat of the dinosaur that was a theme in their class story. They talked about their work with accurate use of language and the discussion showed that the teachers had developed the skills of observation carefully and logically and the children were able to apply these well. Work around the reception classes shows that children have developed good skills in artwork and they are proud of their achievements. They enjoy discussing these and explaining how they created the finished work.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1, 2 and 3

### ENGLISH and MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

#### Main strength and weaknesses

- Pupils in Year 7 achieve well.
- Teachers do not use assessment well enough to plan future learning.
- The attitudes and behaviour of pupils are consistently very good.
- Support for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is good.
- Monitoring does not focus sharply enough on improving teaching and learning.

#### Commentary

43. By the time pupils leave the school in Year 7, standards are good. The 2003 national results for Year 6 and Year 2 show that pupils reached above average standards compared with all schools. Compared with similar schools, Year 6 pupils were above average, whilst Year 2 was below. Inspection findings however, show that the current Year 6 is achieving standards that are average. Staffing difficulties have had an effect on this year group and go some way to explain the fall in standards. Current standards in Year 2 are similar to last year, with some good attainment in writing. Although the picture since the last inspection remains broadly the same, standards overall show a general improvement, particularly in writing. This is because the school has begun to track the attainment of each pupil accurately and in detail and looks ahead, setting standards to be reached. Overall, achievement is satisfactory. There is good achievement in Year 7.
44. Although teachers make use of assessment information to track pupils' progress, there are inconsistencies in the effectiveness of how well teachers diagnose what pupils know and what they need to learn next, and how well this is recorded. Assessment and monitoring procedures are in place but are not rigorous enough to inform teachers of an individual pupil's progress overall. Those with high levels of special educational need do well because their needs are carefully analysed and good individual educational plans are made for them.
45. Standards in speaking and listening are satisfactory throughout the school and above average by Year 7. Younger pupils speak with confidence, enter into discussions well and communicate their meaning. More-able pupils in Year 2 have a good vocabulary and are beginning to use it in their writing. By Year 7, many pupils have developed the ability to capture the listener's interest through the use of an extensive vocabulary and reasoned discussions. Pupils make satisfactory progress in reading. Younger pupils are beginning to use a range of strategies to read unfamiliar words. They are beginning to identify authors that they like, for example, pupils in Year 2 enjoy reading books by Mike Inkpen and John Burningham. Older pupils have a good knowledge of a variety of authors and talk confidently about the books they prefer to read. They have good opportunities to read both independently and in groups. Pupils have good opportunities to write in different ways and work on display and in books shows that they write poems and plays as well as stories. Achievement is satisfactory overall, but there are some good examples of pupils using descriptive language well to enhance their work.



46. The quality of teaching and learning ranges from satisfactory to very good; it is satisfactory overall. There is a significant proportion of good teaching in Years 3 to 6. When teaching was very good, pupils became engrossed in lessons and therefore learned well. They were challenged appropriately by the high expectations of the teacher. Teaching was often, but not always, stimulating and well matched to pupils' abilities and previous experiences. When lessons were less successful, introductions were overlong and pupils were not given enough time to complete their written work. In all lessons, very good relationships enabled pupils to feel confident in offering ideas and classroom assistants were used effectively to help slower learners to achieve as well as all the others. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject. Pupils' attitudes to their work are very positive and they invariably behave well, even when lessons are less inspiring.
47. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator is aware of the need for assessment and monitoring to be more rigorous. The monitoring of lessons, planning and pupils' work has not been rigorous enough to identify strengths and areas for improvement in order to improve further the quality and consistency of teaching and learning. Very little use is made of ICT to enhance learning.

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

48. Literacy is satisfactorily developed across the curriculum. Pupils have opportunities to write in different styles, especially in Years 6 and 7, as for example, recounting Greek myths in history. This is still an area for further development. Opportunities to consolidate and extend key literacy skills in other subjects are not grasped with sufficient rigour in all classes, in part because pupils use whiteboards and then their writing is discarded without pupils or teachers having a full opportunity to assess learning.

### **FRENCH**

49. Pupils in Year 7 learn French. This subject was sampled, and one lesson observed. The lesson was very effective because the teacher had very good subject knowledge, was well prepared and understood very well how to interest and motivate pupils to learn another language. She planned work well for pupils of different prior attainment and assessed well during the lesson in order to challenge pupils. The good range of interesting activities included hot seating, role-play and listening to recordings of native speakers of French. Standards in speaking and listening are good. All pupils answer different questions posed by the teacher in a complete sentence and they demonstrated good understanding of what the native speakers were saying on the recordings. Pupils' achievement is good. Standards in speaking and listening are better than at the time of the last inspection when many pupils could not answer in sentences. Pupils' writing indicates that standards are average and pupils' reading skills demonstrated in the lesson were always at least satisfactory. Learning in French lessons makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development.

### **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**. It is **good** in Year 7.

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

- Standards are not high enough in Year 6.
- Pupils have good attitudes.
- Pupils' achievement is good in Years 1 and 2 and in Year 7.

- There is a weakness in the teaching of calculation.
- Assessment is unsatisfactory.
- There is insufficient use of ICT.
- Monitoring is not rigorous enough.

### **Commentary**

50. Pupils' standards are average by the end of Year 7. Achievement is satisfactory overall. In the 2003 tests, pupils' standards were above average in Year 2 and well below average in Year 6. The inspection judgements reflect this. At the time of the last inspection, standards were as they are now in Years 2 and 7 but better than currently in Year 6. This represents unsatisfactory improvement. The school has been taking significant action over the past year to address this.
51. Standards in the current Year 6 are well below average overall. The school identified that the achievement of these pupils was unsatisfactory in earlier years. Action was taken to improve teaching and learning with the result that achievement is now satisfactory. The school's tracking shows that these pupils have made good progress over the past year. In particular, the school has concentrated on ensuring that as many pupils as possible attain average standards. Inspection evidence confirms that the majority will. However, too few pupils will achieve Level 5 in order to raise the overall results. Training and support for teaching staff has been put into place in other classes so that pupils are now making at least satisfactory progress in Years 3 to 6. Standards are improving, particularly in Year 5 where pupils are achieving well and their standards are good.
52. The achievement of pupils in Years 1 and 2 is good. Most Year 2 pupils are working at the expected Level 2, with a significant proportion working at the higher Level 3. In Year 7 pupils achieve well and raise their standards significantly. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory and pupils with English as an additional language are achieving in line with other pupils. The school has identified some gifted and talented pupils in mathematics and is beginning to address their needs but this is an area for development. There is no significant difference in the attainment of girls and boys.
53. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. They are good in Year 7 and good lessons were seen through Years 1 to 6. In most classes, pupils engage well with their work and persevere to solve problems. Relationships are very good. Since September there has been intensive action to improve standards, especially in Years 3 and 5. Part of the action has been to ensure consistency through the school, as well as in these classes. This is having an effect but there are still one or two teachers not following agreed approaches. For example, over the presentation of pupils' work and in teachers' planning. In a number of classes through the school, teachers' plans are very good with precise information about what pupils need to learn and the expected outcomes for different groups of pupils. These teachers identify key vocabulary, their own input and pupils' tasks. Monitoring is not sufficiently rigorous to ensure that all teachers follow the practice of the best, so that in two classes, teachers' plans merely describe the pupils' tasks and do not sufficiently consider what pupils will have learnt by the end of the lesson. Although pupils have targets for improvement, the use of assessment to help pupils consistently achieve their best is unsatisfactory. This results in teachers not being sufficiently aware of how to enable more pupils to achieve at above-average levels. There is some good developmental marking and annotation of work in several classes through the school, which helps pupils understand what they need to do to improve, but it is not consistent.

54. Leadership and management of the subject is satisfactory. The school has worked hard to tackle the dip in progress they identified in Key Stage 2 and standards are significantly improved in Year 5. Monitoring is improving but still needs more rigour, especially in ensuring all issues are acted upon. The current action plan is much better than the previous one because it focuses more clearly on improving standards. The school carried out a detailed analysis of test results after last year's National Curriculum and optional tests and identified a weakness in the calculation strand of number. Some teachers have been given focussed support from Local Education Authority advisers to help with this, and whole school training has been arranged for the spring and summer terms of 2004. Training has had a positive effect in some classes, but calculation still remains a weakness in others where there is insufficient evidence of pupils' own recording of their calculation methods, including recording on empty number lines and using jottings.
55. There is insufficient use of ICT to support the learning of mathematics. There was too little evidence of its use in the pupils' work over the past year and in lessons pupils were usually using it to practise their multiplication tables. Some good use in Year 1 included work on shape linked well to the objectives for the lesson.

#### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

56. The use of mathematics in other subjects is unsatisfactory. In particular, there are many missed opportunities in science and in ICT.

### **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

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

- By the end of Year 6 standards are not high enough.
- In Year 7 pupils make good progress and achieve well.
- The quality of learning in Years 1 and 2 which enables pupils to 'be scientists'.
- Information and communication technology is not used sufficiently to teach science.
- Assessment information is not consistently used well to match work to pupils' different levels of ability.

#### **Commentary**

57. Standards in Year 7 are average. Standards at the end of Year 6 are well below average. This is the same judgment as shown in the results of national tests in 2003. Although a large proportion of the pupils are attaining average levels this year, too few will achieve the higher, Level 5. The inspection finds that most pupils are attaining average levels in science by the end of Year 2. This is a good improvement on last year. Currently achievement is satisfactory overall but pupils now in Year 6 have not made consistent progress year on year over the past four years, particularly the more able pupils. This has been due to previous inconsistencies in the teaching and the school has taken action to remedy this. The school has recognised that challenging more able pupils remains a problem and is putting in place measures to improve the teaching and learning in science for all pupils in the school. Since the previous inspection, standards have improved in Year 7 but have declined in Year 6.
58. Pupils in Year 7 achieve well and make good progress so that by the time they leave the school they have 'caught up' and attain levels similar to those found nationally. This is because teaching and learning in Year 7 are good. The teachers ensure that there is a

good balance between teaching facts and pupils developing their understanding through experimentation. Pupils in Year 7 show very good attitudes to science and work together well in groups. Good teaching has enabled pupils to develop a good understanding of scientific ideas. Their ability to draw on prior knowledge is good and they talk logically about science, showing that the teacher has ensured they understand the work they are doing.

59. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Talking to pupils in Years 1 and 2 and looking at their work shows that the school is addressing the weaknesses identified in the teaching of science. In particular, the teachers have worked hard to give pupils a sense of “being scientists” by encouraging them to develop their own methods of investigation and recording. For instance, pupils investigating various forces drew accurate illustrations of their findings. Teachers support pupils where necessary through the provision of writing frames and this is successful in helping pupils think through the scientific ideas they are being taught. Pupils are given good opportunities to develop their skills in ‘hands-on’ experiments, which they talk about and evaluate well. Pupils are encouraged to predict possible outcomes and discuss what actually happens and why. The teachers have developed a supportive climate in the classrooms in which scientific discovery can take place without pupils feeling that they have failed if their predictions happen to be wrong. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 has not been good enough in the past to enable pupils to build on their earlier learning. Although it is now satisfactory overall, there are still weaknesses in ensuring pupils consistently make progress in developing their investigation skills and in challenging more able pupils to achieve at higher levels in all classes. Discussions with pupils shows that those in some classes in Years 3 and 4 do not have sufficient opportunities to reinforce and apply their learning through practical activities but pupils in Years 5 and 6 show some good understanding of their science as well as of the scientific routines of experimentation.
60. Computers are not used as often as they could be to enrich pupils’ learning. Discussions with pupils indicates that sensor equipment is now used in science, which is an improvement on the previous inspection, and pupils sometimes use graph packages to present their results. However, the use of ICT in science across the school is underdeveloped.
61. Leadership and management of the subject have been unsatisfactory. The teacher responsible has been absent for a considerable time and it is only recently that another teacher has taken on the role. The previous report recognised some weaknesses in science, which the school still has to address. However, the actions the new co-ordinator has already put in place show that the school fully understands the areas that need to be improved if standards are to rise. These include time for her to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in the subject and opportunities for her to sample work that pupils are doing in order to track their progress. Termly and yearly plans for the subject are based on national guidelines. However, in spite of teachers’ plans showing that different work will be offered to pupils of different levels of ability, study of pupils’ past work shows that this does not happen often enough. Teachers do not use assessment to identify what different groups of pupils need to learn next with the result that too much work at the same level is given to all pupils. This has an adverse effect on their learning and achievement, especially for those of higher ability.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in ICT is **unsatisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers' lack of subject knowledge means that they do not ensure pupils develop their ICT capability and make sufficient progress in all areas of the subject.
- The new subject leader for ICT has carried out some very effective monitoring and has a clear view of the weaknesses in provision.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning in ICT lessons are very good.
- Provision of resources is now good for cross-curricular work and for pupils with special educational needs.

### **Commentary**

62. Standards are below those expected nationally by the time pupils leave the school in Year 7 and at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This is a slight improvement since the last inspection when standards were well below national expectations because insufficient time was spent on ICT. The school has ensured that all pupils now have timetabled time in the computer suite and problems over resources have been solved. Pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory overall because their standards and achievement in handling data and in control and modelling are unsatisfactory. More able pupils in particular are not challenged sufficiently in these aspects. However, their achievement in the 'communication strand' is satisfactory. By the end of Year 7, pupils are confident in their use of computers and fluent in their ability to hunt for images using a search engine and using these in presentations.
63. Teaching and learning is unsatisfactory because pupils do not make sufficient progress in all areas of ICT. Although all teachers have had training, this has been of insufficient quality and quantity to sufficiently improve their knowledge and understanding in all aspects of the subject. Teachers are gaining in confidence now due to the good input of a new subject leader. Most teachers conscientiously plan and teach tasks and the subject leader gives good support by demonstrating and assisting with planning. Teachers are using assessment but do not match it to the national expectations. For example, in Year 2 too few pupils know how to save their work independently. In Year 6 and 7 the national guidelines are not followed systematically. As a result, work is often set at too low a level which means the pupils are not able to make the progress they should and attain the standards of which they are capable, especially in data handling. Where teachers plan and assess well, for example, in reception, pupils' learning is systematic and their achievement is good.
64. Leadership and management have been unsatisfactory. The school recognised this and a new subject leader took over responsibility last September, with good results. Together with the school's very efficient technician, she has dealt with problems associated with hardware and software. She has given all teachers a clear overview of what should be taught and when. She has carried out lesson observations and given good written feedback. She has recently extended this monitoring into sampling pupils' work and in getting pupils to show her what work they can do independently. This is a very good strategy and, together with her analysis of work pupils have produced, gives her a good view of the weaknesses in teaching. She has already been proactive in supporting teachers where they need support.
65. Pupils enjoy using the computers and look forward to ICT lessons. Their good attitudes and behaviour together with good motivation means they often persevere, help each other and try different solutions to problems.

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

66. This is unsatisfactory. The school has been introducing the use of laptops in other subjects and some good use was seen, such as in Year 1, but this it is at the early stages. Few teachers use the potential of the digital projector as a teaching tool. The ICT subject leader has recently equipped the co-ordinator for special educational needs with a set of laptops and the use of these to support pupils with special educational needs is developing well. Other subject leaders have not been sufficiently proactive either in identifying when and how ICT can be used in their subject, or in monitoring to judge its effectiveness in improving learning.

## **HUMANITIES**

67. No overall judgement is made about provision, standards and teaching in geography and history, because these subjects were not inspected in detail. It was not possible to observe any lessons, but planning indicates that statutory requirements are met in both subjects. The work in **geography** shows that pupils in Year 2 study the local area using maps of the area and the Internet. In **history**, they have compared pictures of the seafront 'then and now' comparing the differences. Older pupils acquire a suitable knowledge of rivers and learn to use technical vocabulary, such as source, tributary and estuary accurately, and they understand the water cycle. Topic work in both history and geography by pupils in Year 6 is well presented and shows that they have used research skills well to produce booklets on the ancient Greeks and rivers. Work from Year 7 indicates good assessment procedures that have a positive impact on the progress pupils make.

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

### **MUSIC**

Provision in music is **good**.

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

- Teaching in Years 3 to 7 is highly effective because of the teacher's high expectations based on very good subject knowledge.

#### **Commentary**

68. By the end of Years 2, 6 and 7, pupils' overall standards are in line with those expected nationally. The standards in singing are good. This shows good improvement since the last inspection.

69. Pupils' achievement is good because the teaching is good. The range and quality of experiences in each lesson, especially in Years 3 to 7 is often very good. This is due to the specialist teacher's very good expertise and excellent management of pupils, which allows lessons to have a fast pace, a range of activities and a good level of challenge. Due to the effective and accurate use of on-going assessment, pupils rapidly develop accuracy in pitch and rhythm and quickly learn new technical vocabulary. The lessons are fun as well as challenging and this leads to very good enjoyment and commitment to learn from the pupils. Group activities explicitly support pupils' social development, which is very good.

70. The subject is led effectively. The profile of music in the school is high. The provision is significantly enriched through extra-curricular activities and through individual music tuition. The school makes very good use of music in assemblies, where the enjoyment of action songs is infectious and supports the pupils' spiritual development very effectively.

### **Design and technology, art and design, and physical education**

71. These subjects were sampled during the inspection, but not in sufficient detail to provide a judgement on provision. Two lessons were seen in physical education. Teachers' planning and pupils' work were analysed for the other two subjects.

72. Work seen indicates that standards in **art and design** are average overall with some good work through the school. The school uses national guidelines and teachers' planning shows this is translated well into a good range of activities often linked very well to work in other subjects. For example, Year 3 pupils are introduced to work by Monet linked to a study trip to Lulworth and in Year 1 pupils are introduced to work by artists such as Bridget Riley in their study of pattern. In Year 2 pupils' modelling in salt dough is of a very high standard, showing creativity and imagination and very good attention to detail.

73. In **design and technology**, from analysis of pupils' work in Years 2 and 6 and from discussions with them, average standards are being reached in both designing and making and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. The work for Year 7 was of a good standard and from discussions with the pupils it is clearly a subject they enjoy and one in which they are achieving well. They describe how they have used the Internet for research to support their design work.

74. In **physical education**, from discussions with pupils in Years 2, 6 and 7, it is evident that they enjoy physical education, take part in games, gymnastics and dance lessons and appreciate the very good range of after school clubs that the school runs and the opportunities that they have to take part in competitions. Two games lessons were observed in Years 3 and 4. These lessons were unsatisfactory because there was insufficient attention to the development of the skills of throwing, catching, batting and bowling. Instead, pupils were very quickly organised into large games of rounders, which meant that they spent a large proportion of their time inactive. This lack of challenge led to unsatisfactory behaviour. There was insufficient teacher and peer feedback to help them improve. Monitoring of this subject is not rigorous enough to ensure that teaching follows national guidelines.

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

The quality of provision in personal, social and health education and citizenship is **good**.

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

- Circle time is used well to support the personal development of the pupils.
- There are good opportunities for pupils to learn to play an active role as citizens.
- There are some missed opportunities to extend pupils' understanding of the wide range of cultures and beliefs represented in Great Britain.
- Pupils are encouraged to exercise responsibility for the life of the school.
- Pupils are well prepared to deal with peer pressure and to resist it when appropriate.

## Commentary

75. Standards are good. The pupils are deeply committed to ensuring that they play a key part in making the school a happy and secure environment for all. As they move through the years, they acquire increasing refinement in their understanding of the contribution they can make to society. In Year 7, pupils build well on their knowledge of human rights and responsibilities and show a growing awareness of the influence of peer group pressure. Understanding of the implications for pupils of living in a multicultural and multi-faith society is less well developed. Boys and girls demonstrate similar levels of insight into their role in society. Pupils who experience learning difficulties mix fluently and confidently with their peers and value their own achievements. The more able pupils extend their understanding well in the many opportunities for discussion and debate.
76. Teaching is good. A strength lies in the way that circle time<sup>2</sup> is used to allow pupils to explore their feelings and attitudes to one another. The pupils respond to these lessons with sensitivity and enthusiasm as they share their ideas and feelings with their peers. Teachers relate very positively to the pupils and provide very good role models in the way they deal sensitively with rare cases of misbehaviour.
77. Good leadership and management have ensured that teachers have the resources and guidance to make best use of opportunities in all subjects to explore rights and duties in a democratic society. The subject is well established across the school and does much to support the personal and social lives of the pupils.

---

<sup>2</sup> During Circle Time pupils discuss a wide range of personal and general issues. It is agreed by all pupils that no interruptions should occur and only one person at a time will speak. Respect for other pupils' views will occur at all times and therefore pupils feel confident that they can talk with ease and free from any form of interference of interruption from other children.



## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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