

INSPECTION REPORT

ST. JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC INFANT SCHOOL

Aylesbury

LEA area: Buckinghamshire

Unique reference number: 110478

Headteacher: Mrs Angela Gavin

Lead inspector: Mrs Sue O'Sullivan

Dates of inspection: 7th – 10th June 2004

Inspection number: 257738

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant school
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 - 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	205
School address:	Hazell Avenue Aylesbury Buckinghamshire
Postcode:	HP21 7JF
Telephone number:	01296 484618
Fax number:	01296 719748
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr John Rogers

Date of previous inspection: 11th – 14th May 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St Joseph's is a two-form entry Catholic infant school for 205 pupils in pre-reception, reception and Years 1 and 2. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is in line with the national average. There are two pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need, which is below average. Twenty-six pupils are supported by funding from the ethnic minority achievement grant. Ten pupils are at an early stage of learning English, most of whom are from Filipino families. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals is well below average. Mobility of pupils is slight. There are no traveller pupils in the school at present. Although the school is situated in a relatively affluent area, only 13 per cent of its pupils come from this ward. As 95 per cent of pupils are from families who are practising Catholics, the catchment area covers Aylesbury and surrounding villages. Some pupils, therefore, come from areas which show indicators of socio-economic disadvantage. Attainment on entry to the pre-reception class is below average. On entry to reception, attainment is average.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
31525	Sue O'Sullivan	Lead inspector	English, science, geography, history, personal, social, health education and citizenship, English as an additional language
16472	Cathy Stormonth	Lay inspector	
28200	Paul Stevens	Team inspector	Mathematics, information and communication technology, art and design, design and technology, music.
18709	Nina Bee	Team inspector	Foundation Stage, physical education, special educational needs

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REPORT CONTENTS	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	8
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	10
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	15
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS	17
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE ONE	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	27

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

St Joseph's is a good school with many strengths. It is outstanding in the commitment of governors, headteacher and staff to the care of every child. Its links with parents are very good and pupils feel valued and happy. Standards are above average in English and mathematics and all children achieve well across the school. Teaching is good and a third is very good. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The school's high expectations of good conduct, its promotion of respect and trust and of the values and principles enshrined in its mission statement are outstanding.
- All pupils achieve well and particularly well in reading and mathematics.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are very good.
- The headteacher and governors have a very clear vision for the school and provide very good leadership.
- The school works very well with parents, who are very happy with the way the school cares for their children.
- Although teaching is good across the school and much is very good, there is some unevenness in the quality of teaching and learning.

Since the previous inspection, the school has continued to provide a high quality of education. The nature of the school has changed from a first to an infant school and the size of the school has been reduced to two forms of entry. The attainment of children on entry to the pre-reception class is lower than at the previous inspection and is now below the national average. By the age of seven, standards in reading remain well above average. Standards in writing have declined a little over time but are rising again and are above average. Standards in mathematics have risen. The school has dealt well with the two key issues from the previous inspection that are relevant to the infant school.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
reading	B	A	B	C
writing	B	B	C	E
mathematics	B	A	B	C

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. This measure does not fully reflect the intake of the school.

Achievement overall is good. Many children enter the pre-reception class with below average attainment, especially in language development. They make good progress and enter the reception classes with average attainment. By the end of reception, most children are likely to meet the early learning goals.¹ The preliminary results of national tests taken at the age of seven in 2004 show that standards in reading are well above average and above average in writing and mathematics. The evidence of the inspection is that they are above average in

¹ The early learning goals are a set of skills, knowledge and understanding that children might be expected to reach by the age of five in the six areas of learning.

music, art and design and in design and technology. Standards are average in science and in information and communication technology (ICT), in history and geography and in physical education. The time children spend in the Foundation Stage depends on their birth dates, and varies by up to two terms. The children who spend longer in the Foundation Stage achieve more highly. Higher-attaining pupils achieve very well in reading and mathematics.

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **very good**. Their personal development is **very good**. Their spiritual and cultural development is **good** and their moral and social development is **very good**.²

Attendance is satisfactory overall, although a few pupils are taken out of school for extended periods.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is **good**. In its care for all pupils and in its provision for their personal development, it is very good and this contributes very well to pupils' enthusiasm for learning and their enjoyment. This care and attention to the needs of every child contribute to their good achievement across the school. Teaching is good and in a third of lessons it is very good. It is particularly effective in the pre-reception class and in the teaching of English and mathematics across the school and this leads to good achievement by pupils. There is some unevenness in the quality of teaching and learning. The very good links that the school maintains with parents contribute very effectively towards their children's achievement. The curriculum meets statutory requirements and the school's provision for other activities, visits and celebrations enriches the curriculum well.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership of the headteacher is **very good**. She has a clear vision and a deep personal commitment to the school, the staff and to all pupils. She has achieved a great deal since her appointment two years ago. Governance is **very good**. The governors work closely with the headteacher to fulfil the school's mission statement and are closely involved in supporting and guiding the school. The management of the school is **good**. The organisation of the school is well managed and there is a strong team spirit among the staff and voluntary supporters. The links with initial teacher training institutions are valuable, but the difficulty of retaining teachers due to the high cost of local housing is a barrier to further achievement.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very happy with the way the school provides for their children. They feel that their children are happy and are learning well, that teachers have high expectations of their work and of their conduct, and that children thrive.

Most pupils like the school very much. They think the things they learn are interesting and that lessons are fun, that teachers are always ready to help them and that they are expected to work hard. A minority of pupils are critical of boisterous or thoughtless behaviour but do not experience bullying.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important thing the school should do to improve is:

- deal with the unevenness in the quality of teaching and so raise standards overall.

² Religious education was inspected by a separate, diocesan, inspection team under Section 23 of the School Inspections Act (1996). No lessons of religious education were observed on this inspection, which was undertaken under Section 10 of the Act.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Achievement in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2 is **good**. It is **very good** in reading. Standards are well above average in reading, above average in mathematics, and average in science. The achievement of higher-attaining pupils is well above average in reading and mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language achieve well. There is no significant difference in the achievement of boys and girls.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics are rising.
- In the Foundation Stage the majority of children achieve well.
- In Years 1 and 2 pupils achieve well, including those with special educational needs.
- Higher-attaining pupils achieve well in the core subjects.
- Standards are above average in music, art and design and in design and technology.

Commentary

Foundation Stage

1. The majority of children are on course to meet the early learning goals in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, and physical and creative development. A small number are likely to exceed them. In their personal and social development, the majority are likely to exceed the expected levels. As the majority of children enter the pre-reception class with below-average attainment, their achievement in pre-reception and reception classes is good. The time children spend in the Foundation Stage depends on their birth dates, and varies by up to two terms. The children who spend longer in the Foundation Stage achieve more highly. but the achievement of all children is at least satisfactory.

Key Stage 1

2. Standards by the age of seven in the 2003 national tests were above average in reading and mathematics and average in writing. In teacher assessments in science, standards were average. The number of pupils who reached the higher Level 3 in reading and mathematics was well above average when compared with all schools nationally and above average in comparison with similar schools. In science, the number of pupils who reached Level 3 was well above average in comparison with all and with similar schools. The preliminary results of tests in 2004 show that standards in reading, writing and mathematics have risen and are likely to be well above average in reading and mathematics and above average in writing. The standards seen on inspection support these findings.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.8 (17.6)	15.7 (15.8)

writing	14.7 (15.0)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	17.4 (18.1)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 72 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

- The majority of pupils currently in Year 2 entered the school in the pre-reception class with standards that were generally below average, especially in language development. These results show, therefore, that their achievement since then has been very good in reading and mathematics and good in writing. Higher-attaining pupils achieve particularly well in reading, mathematics and science. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. Pupils for whom English is an additional language benefit from the strong emphasis on language development across the school and achieve well. In music, art and design and in design and technology, standards are above average and achievement is good. In ICT, geography, history and physical education, standards are in line with expectations and achievement is satisfactory. Pupils' skills in English, mathematics and ICT enable them to make good progress overall across the curriculum.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Behaviour and attitudes to learning are **very good**. Aspects of personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are also **very good**. These aspects have improved since the previous inspection. Attendance is **satisfactory** and improving. Punctuality is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are very keen to come to school and are enthusiastic about all aspects of school life.
- Behaviour is usually very good, in lessons and around the school.
- The school's ethos is highly inclusive and its mission statement and school aims are fully reflected in its work and practice.
- Parents are less supportive when they take holidays in term time and children miss school.

Commentary

- The school promotes good attendance and works hard to achieve average attendance rates and hardly any unauthorised absence. One quarter of absence, however, is attributable to parents taking holidays in term time, despite the school's best efforts to discourage this. Most pupils arrive at school on time and timekeeping during the school day is good. Pupils are developing the important life skill of good timekeeping very well.
- Attitudes to learning and to the school are very good. Pupils are happy and many confirmed how lucky they felt to be at such a good school. They are full of praise for the fun and interesting lessons they enjoy and say how kind and supportive their teachers are. Pupils have a real desire to learn and succeed. They work hard, feel exhilarated by achievement and are justly proud of their good work.
- Pupils are helpful, friendly and consistently behave very well. Breaktimes and lunchtimes are lively and pupils amuse themselves well. Pupils show reverence during Mass and assemblies. Bullying and other forms of harassment are rare and are not tolerated. When any pupil raises a behaviour concern, it is dealt with seriously and pupils are very pleased about this. The small number of fixed-term exclusions last year involved only one pupil, who has since moved to a more suitable specialist school.

7. Pupils' personal development is fostered very well. The youngest children are achieving the high standards in personal and social development that stay with pupils all the way through school. Spiritual development is good, especially when pupils explore and reflect on the wonder of life, essential values and understand feelings and emotions. Pupils express these elements well in their writing in science, music, art and in personal and social education. Continuous positive reinforcement of the values of respect, care for others, trust, fairness, kindness and high moral standards are very strong. This helps pupils to have high standards of behaviour and be considerate and thoughtful in their approaches to others. Social awareness is promoted very well, especially when pupils raise money for good causes. Cultural development is good and pupils learn about their own and other cultural traditions well, for example in art and design, music and through the visit of a Caribbean storyteller. Pupils of minority ethnic heritage share their knowledge and experiences and the Chinese New Year, Diwali, Ramadan and Eid have all been celebrated. The focus for this term is on the Philippines, celebrating the culture and language of a significant minority of pupils in the school.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (94.2%)

Authorised absence	
School data:	5.8
National data:	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data:	0.0
National data:	0.4

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

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	145	5	
White – Irish	7		
White – any other White background	9		
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	9		
Mixed – White and Black African	4		
Mixed – any other mixed background	5		
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	4		
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	12		
Black or Black British – Caribbean	2		
Black or Black British – African	2		
Any other ethnic group	3		
No ethnic group recorded	1		

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**. Its strengths lie in its very inclusive care and guidance for all pupils, the very good links it maintains with parents, good teaching and a good range of activities to enrich the curriculum.

Teaching and learning

Teaching is **good** and pupils learn **well**. The quality of assessment of pupils' work is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching of the core subjects is good and pupils achieve well.

- Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good and is very good for personal, social and emotional development.
- Teachers plan effectively, with a good emphasis on practical activities and investigations that generate enthusiastic response from pupils.
- The management of behaviour by teachers and class assistants is very good and pupils with behavioural or learning difficulties are included well in lessons.
- Assessment practice is very good in English and mathematics.
- There are some inconsistencies in teaching that lead to variations in pupils' learning.

Commentary

8. The teaching of English, mathematics, science and ICT is good overall. Occasionally it is very good. In English, it is made particularly effective in reading, through good teaching of phonics, by teachers' recourse to a wide range of fiction and non-fiction to stimulate pupils' interest and through guided reading in small groups. Pupils achieve very well as a result, enjoying their books and related activities. In mathematics, the organisation of Year 2 pupils into groups according to their mathematical ability allows all pupils to achieve well. This is a significant factor in the achievement by all pupils of at least Level 2 at the age of seven, including those with special educational needs. It also allows pupils who are learning English as an additional language to achieve a higher level in mathematics, reflecting their ability.
9. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is good and contributes well to children's good achievement. When children enter the pre-reception class, their attainment is below average. By the time they leave reception, their standards are average and are above average in their personal, social and emotional development. This is because teachers take every opportunity to reinforce this development. Teachers and class assistants have high expectations of children's behaviour and children respond well to the care with which they are treated. Procedures for tracking their progress are good.
10. In all subjects, teachers' knowledge of the subject is good. They plan learning and track progress well. They use a good range of strategies and resources to help pupils understand new concepts and to consolidate this through practical activities. Pupils enjoy finding things out for themselves and work diligently, in groups, pairs or as individuals. They enjoy their lessons, are quick to co-operate and learn well. Teachers are skilled at reinforcing literacy and ICT skills through their teaching of these in other subjects, but there is less planned use of numeracy skills across the curriculum.
11. Teachers' management of pupils' behaviour is very good. They work closely with class assistants and voluntary helpers to ensure that all pupils are included in the work of their class. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The procedures for identifying and assessing the needs of these pupils are effective in ensuring that individual education plans are well matched to pupils' needs in literacy, numeracy and behaviour. The school's strong emphasis on the development of literacy firmly supports pupils who are learning English as an additional language and they are achieving well.
12. Teachers mark pupils' work conscientiously and tell them how to improve it. Longer-term assessment is good overall and is very good in English and mathematics. The school analyses the data it collects and puts this to very good use in reviewing the performance of different groups, for example that of boys and girls, of higher and lower attaining pupils and of pupils for whom English is an additional language. The school's analysis of the difference in performance at the age of seven of children who are summer-born, and so

have spent less time in the school than their peers, is informing planned action to remedy this next year. The assessment of pupils' progress in foundation subjects is less well developed and the school has noted this in its school improvement plan.

13. Teachers in parallel classes plan their work in liaison, so as to ensure curricular coverage, but sometimes there are inconsistencies between classes in what pupils learn and unevenness in the quality of teaching. Monitoring of teaching in English and mathematics has helped to ensure good provision in these subjects, but monitoring has not yet been extended to other subjects, where there are more differences. Improvement since the previous inspection has been good. In only one lesson was teaching unsatisfactory, compared with 8 per cent at the previous inspection. The proportion of good and very good teaching has also risen significantly, from 50 per cent to 87 per cent, of which a third is very good.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 31 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0%	10 (32%)	17 (55%)	3 (10%)	1 (3%)	(0%)	(0%)

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

The curriculum

The curriculum is **satisfactory** and meets statutory requirements. The range of activities that enrich the curriculum is **good**. Accommodation is **good** and staffing and resources are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision in English and mathematics is good and supports good achievement.
- Provision for personal education is very good.
- The curriculum in the Foundation Stage provides a good start to children's education.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- The range of extra-curricular activities contributes well to pupils' social and cultural development.

Commentary

14. The curriculum provides a satisfactory range of opportunities for pupils to learn in all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. It meets statutory requirements, including those relating to personal and health education. Staff put a strong emphasis on English and mathematics, which has resulted in pupils' good achievement in these subjects, especially in reading. The provision the school makes for pupils' personal development is very good and permeates the whole curriculum. Teachers and support staff work very well together to develop pupils' social, health and moral development and to provide for the learning needs of specific pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who are learning English as an additional language.
15. The provision for the children in the Foundation Stage is good and provides a good basis for their future education. There is a very strong emphasis on the promotion of personal, social and emotional development in all activities. Teachers plan interesting activities thoroughly and according to the national guidance. Learning resources are satisfactory. In addition, the secure outdoor areas are used effectively to support learning in all areas.
16. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The procedures for the identification and assessment of pupils with special educational needs are good. All pupils have individual education plans containing targets to develop their understanding in literacy and numeracy and their awareness of how to behave. Detailed documentation on all pupils informs the adults who work with them of the difficulties they may encounter. Reviews are completed effectively and parents are regularly informed.
17. The school makes good provision of activities that enrich the curriculum. All pupils have opportunities to watch and work with the interesting visitors invited to the school. For example, a visiting artist helped pupils to create lively banners, inspired by their enjoyment of Roald Dahl's stories, to display when they share in the town's celebrations of this local author. Other visitors include a woman from the local community who brought history to life as she spoke about life long ago and a story-teller from the Caribbean who entertained all classes. Pupils

gain from visiting places of educational interest such as the Calvert Environmental Centre. All children have opportunities to take part in sport and other activities that take place after school.

18. The accommodation is good. The school building is well maintained and cared for and effective use is made of available space to provide an ICT suite, music room and library. There is a secure playground and grass area with an exciting adventure playground, which is used by all pupils and helps their physical development. Reception classes have secure, covered outdoor areas to extend their learning outside. Resources are satisfactory overall and are good for English and ICT.

Care, guidance and support

The care and welfare of pupils and the arrangements for health and safety are **very good**. The school provides **good** support, advice and guidance for pupils. Pupils' views are valued well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The care and guidance provided for pupils is a key strength of the school and helps pupils to feel happy and secure and achieve well.
- Pupils value the excellent relationships they develop with dedicated staff.
- The arrangements for child protection and for the care of pupils with specific medical conditions are outstanding.
- The induction of the youngest children into school is very effective.

Commentary

19. The school has a fully inclusive approach to helping others in a very supportive and caring community. Pupils feel that they would always have someone to turn to if they were ever worried or troubled. This reflects the strong Catholic values that permeate everything in the school which were noted at the previous inspection. The effective monitoring of academic and personal development enables any underperformance or unhappiness to be detected quickly. Those pupils are helped to resolve issues and improve their work. This helps to boost pupils' confidence and self-esteem and improves the quality of their school life. Pupils with challenging behaviour are supported very well and are fully included. Additional help and support from the lay chaplain, for those who have more complex needs, provides a safety net to ensure that all pupils feel special and valued. Leadership and management of provision for personal development are very good.
20. Pupils receive good support and guidance in their work, due to the effective use of assessment information. Marking is helpful and the advice given encourages improvement. Pupils are helped to be aware of their learning targets and know what to do to achieve them. Pupils with special educational needs are monitored closely and receive the attention they need to make good progress. Minority groups are very well supported, especially pupils who have recently arrived in the United Kingdom.
21. The arrangements for child protection are excellent and all the requirements are fully met. When pupils are ill or injured, they receive a high level of care and attention. The school takes particularly good care of pupils with specific medical conditions. All the risk assessments and routine checking systems for health and safety throughout the school are thorough and are very good. One concern, noted on the inspection, is that parents are sometimes lax about closing the playground gate during the school day.

22. The arrangements for the induction of pupils into the pre-reception class are very good. Individual arrangements are made to ensure that all settle quickly and happily. The teacher inspires children to really enjoy their learning and the routines of each day. Mid-term newcomers are assigned buddies until they feel settled. Pupils can raise issues and share their thoughts in circle time. They feel that they can talk to their teachers and classmates easily and openly.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The links with parents are **very good**. The school is held in very high regard and is oversubscribed. Links with the local community and other schools are **very good**. These links have improved since the previous inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school works very closely with parents to support learning and to ensure pupils' personal development.
- Very good links with the community contribute strongly to pupils' very good attitudes to learning and their personal development.
- Communication with parents is good but school reports to parents sometimes do not provide sufficient information about what children need to do to improve.

Commentary

23. There is a very strong partnership with parents, who are warmly welcomed into school as an important part of the school community. Parental support for pupils' learning and for the wide range of school activities is very good. Parents feel a very strong sense of partnership, based on very good two-way communications and mutual trust. All parents who responded to the questionnaire and the many spoken to during the inspection felt great confidence in the school, in all its aspects. Parents also praised the 'keeping up with your children' courses and the spin-off benefits for learning that are gained.
24. The arrangements for consultation are very good. School reports need to indicate areas of weakness and advice on improvement. The prospectus and governors' annual report are full and well written. Curriculum information, class letters, newsletters and daily opportunities to talk to staff keep parents fully in touch with school activities and their children's learning. Many parents are voluntary helpers in school, providing good support for reading and other practical activities, as well as for school trips. The parent-teacher association is very active, providing a busy social calendar and very useful funds. Parents' views are regularly surveyed, formally and informally. They form an important part of continuous school improvement and parents appreciate this consultation.
25. Links with the local community are very good. There are strong links with local parishes and the clergy are regular, welcome visitors who enrich pupils' personal development. There are very good links with local groups, which support pupils with special educational needs. The links with the local pupil referral unit are excellent and help with strategies for managing pupils with very challenging behaviour. Links with school medical professionals, welfare services and other support agencies are also very good. The school is let to local groups and gets involved in local activities such as the Roald Dahl celebrations in Aylesbury and initiatives such as the 'safer routes to school' project.
26. Very good links with the feeder pre-school nursery support a happy, effective transfer to school. Links with local primary schools and other Catholic schools enable very useful sharing of resources and good practice. There are also very good links with St Edward's Junior School, to which most pupils transfer. These ensure that pupils' transfers go smoothly and that they settle quickly and happily. There are good links with local high schools and students often come for work experience. Nursing students from Luton University, students training to be nursery nurses at Aylesbury College, and trainee teachers from Oxford Brookes University provide help and support, while receiving very good training in the classroom.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **very good**. The leadership of the headteacher is **very good**. Governance is **very good**. Management and the leadership of other key staff are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The shared commitment of governors, headteacher and staff to the values and principles enshrined in the school's mission statement makes a major contribution to pupils' achievement.
- The headteacher's clear vision and high aspirations create a strong sense of purpose.
- Governors are closely involved in guiding the school and monitoring its performance.
- Leaders build effective teams and leadership and management of the Foundation Stage and of provision for pupils with special educational needs are good.
- Monitoring of pupils' performance by the headteacher and other key staff and taking effective action is very good.
- Financial management is well allied to priorities.
- Monitoring of teaching needs to focus on reducing inconsistencies in quality.

Commentary

27. The governing body makes a significant contribution to the work of the school. Governors share with the headteacher and staff a strong commitment to making a reality of the school's mission statement – "I am special in God's eyes". As a result, the care of pupils is very good and their very good personal development is a strength of the school. Governors also share the headteacher's high aspirations. They work closely together to maintain and improve high standards and achievement, through effective strategic planning, management of staffing and prudent use of financial resources. Governors maintain good links with staff and parents, for instance in supporting parents of pupils with special educational needs. They are well informed about the school's areas for development, as well as its strengths. The governing body performs its statutory duties effectively.
28. The leadership of the headteacher is very good. She has a deep personal commitment to the school, staff and pupils and has achieved a great deal since her substantive appointment two years ago. Through good analysis and evaluation of performance data, she has identified key priorities for raising standards, for instance in reading, and has taken action to improve pupils' achievement. She provides a very good role model for staff and pupils and is highly respected by parents. The headteacher and her senior management team are reflective and seek to learn from good practice elsewhere. For example, the headteacher's analysis has shown that summer-born children do not achieve as well by the age of seven as others. She is to reconsider the organisation of classes to help overcome potential barriers to raising their standards. The difficulty of retaining teachers, as a result of the high cost of local housing, is a barrier to further achievement.
29. Delegation of responsibilities to other curriculum leaders is effectively managed through performance management. Curriculum leadership and management are generally good, including the management of provision for pupils with special educational needs and of the Foundation Stage. The management of the school ensures that it runs smoothly and that pupils' needs are well met. The lay chaplain and support assistants are well included in the work of the school and make a significant contribution to it.

30. Financial management is good. The school has incurred a deficit of approximately £30,000 as a result of the reduction in the school's roll from three forms of entry to two. The school has been selected to receive Targeted Transitional Grant which will cover 38 per cent of the deficit. The governors and headteacher have worked closely with the local education authority and have agreed a budget deficit reduction plan to clear the deficit by 2007. Financial decisions are closely matched to educational priorities. The principles of best value are applied, where this is feasible.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	417,273
Total expenditure	447,701
Expenditure per pupil	2,926

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	-1,578
Balance carried forward to the next	-30,427

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **good**. Teaching is **good overall** and sometimes it is very good. Leadership and management are **good**.

31. Personal and social skills are very well promoted in many activities. Induction procedures are very good and parents are happy with the information they are given. Children settle quickly and happily into school. When children enter the pre-reception class, at the age of four, attainment is below average, especially in terms of language development. By the end of reception, most children are on course to reach the expected levels of the early learning goals, with a minority of children reaching higher levels. Achievement is good as a result of good teaching. Children who, because of their birth dates, spend less time in the Foundation Stage, achieve less highly overall but their achievement is at least satisfactory. A few children, who have special educational needs or are learning English as an additional language, are well supported. Many children achieve very well in their development of personal and social skills. The curriculum provides a satisfactory range of activities that are well matched to children's needs. There are two secure outdoor areas, which are well used to promote learning in all areas. Provision is well managed, because all adults work well together as a team and leadership is good. The systems for monitoring pupils' progress are good and show how well the children achieve in each area of learning.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- This area is consistently and very well promoted, particularly through very good teaching.
- Most children achieve very well.
- Children develop good attitudes to learning and behave very well.
- The children develop very good relationships with each other and with the adults who work with them.

Commentary

32. Very good provision enables most children to reach at least the expected levels by the end of their time in reception, with a significant number on course to exceed these levels. Given their attainment on entry, this is very good achievement. Teaching is very good and teaching assistants provide good support. Children work in pairs and small groups and begin to develop the skills necessary to work independently. They take turns and help each other. All children select activities with confidence and know that they are expected to tidy away at the end of each session. They thoroughly enjoy learning, generally listen well and concentrate hard. Adults have high expectations of behaviour and children behave very well. Personal independence is very well developed. For example, the youngest children in the pre-reception class walk very sensibly with a friend to take the register to the office. In reception, older children are each day given the choice of whom they would like to sit with to eat their lunch. They do this maturely and sensibly.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and often it is very good.
- Adults work effectively at developing children's literacy skills.
- Children respond well to teaching and make good progress.
- Basic writing skills are very well taught in the pre-reception class.
- Behaviour is very good and contributes to good learning.

Commentary

33. Most children are on course to attain the expected levels by the end of their time in reception. A few children are likely to exceed these levels. Achievement is good. All adults have a good understanding of the skills needed to begin to communicate, read and write. The children, for their part, work hard and concentrate well on the activities they are given. Teaching is good overall. Teaching is very good in the pre-reception class. In particular, the teaching of writing is very good in this class, so all children are beginning to write clear, well-formed letters. In reception, children become confident writers and begin to be aware of the need to spell words correctly. On occasion, adults miss good chances to let children do this spontaneously. The children in both reception classes have many opportunities to develop speaking skills, so most speak clearly and confidently. In the pre-reception class, a few children have difficulties in speaking or are reluctant to speak. Teachers and assistants make the most of opportunities to develop oral confidence and vocabulary throughout the day. All children are developing a love of books and an interest in looking at them. In reception, higher- and average-attaining children read simple texts confidently and fluently. Lower attainers tell the story from the pictures. In all classes, the children are keen to learn and behave very well as they work on writing and reading skills. A volunteer helper regularly comes in and supports children with their reading. She has developed very good relationships with the children and consistently gives good quality support.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good, so children achieve well.
- Teachers and assistants develop children's learning well through questioning and good use of resources.
- The children's good attitudes to learning lead them to work hard.
- Behaviour is very good and this also contributes to good learning.

Commentary

34. Most children are on course to meet the expected levels by the end of reception. A few children are likely to exceed the expected levels. The achievement of all children is good. This is because teaching is good and also because most children enjoy their work and are developing good attitudes to learning. In the pre-reception class, children develop awareness of numbers and are learning to count accurately. In reception classes, most children write numbers correctly and begin to use mental calculation. Good teaching encourages them to think about what they do and explain their thinking. Teachers and assistants work well with children to help them to articulate their mathematical understanding. While children are working, they ask questions that match their individual needs well. As a result, children are developing confidence and use mathematical terms

successfully. This makes a good contribution to their language development. Resources are well used to give children practical experience of numbers and shapes.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and on occasion it is very good.
- Activities are well planned, interesting and develop children's understanding of their own environment.
- Children respond well to good teaching, developing very good relationships with each other and with the adults who work with them.

Commentary

35. Most children are on course to reach the expected levels by the end of reception. Achievement is good as a result of good, sometimes very good, teaching. Teachers' planning and the lessons seen show that children have exciting opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world around them. In all classes and in the outside areas, there is clear evidence of children developing a good idea of how flowering plants and vegetables grow. Children in reception read from information books to learn about snails. They use magnifying glasses very enthusiastically as they look at how snails move. Writing skills are reinforced well in reception as children develop their own little books about mini beasts. One higher-attaining girl wrote 'Mini Beasts can be dangerous especially scorpions...in a story they killed someone'. In all classes, children develop a good idea of how their senses work. Listening skills are promoted well during circle times and during sessions where the children listen to music. Children in the pre-reception class made pizza buns. The teaching assistant supported them well as she developed their vocabulary, naming toppings such as 'salami' and 'grated cheese'. Learning was good because the children listened well and had good opportunities to use utensils, such as cheese graters and knives, to spread tomato puree. All children have satisfactory opportunities to develop ICT skills, both in the classroom and in the computer suite. Construction toys are regularly used in all classes, as children work in groups or choose to work alone and this contributes to the development of their awareness of their environment.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

36. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement on provision in physical development. Analysis of teachers' planning and some observations show that children have good opportunities to use large apparatus in the hall and play games such as skittles in the outdoor area. In addition all children use the adventure playground to swing, balance and climb. All children learn to handle tools such as pencils, pens and scissors safely. They work well in small groups as they use construction toys. Most children share equipment amicably.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

37. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement on provision for creative development. There are good activities using soft materials such as dough and clay. A teaching assistant was seen giving good quality support, as children made mini beasts from clay. She worked hard at developing language and was supportive as she showed children how to mould and roll clay. As a result, learning was good in this session because the children listened attentively and concentrated well on what they were doing. Children are given good opportunities to play imaginatively in areas such as the role play area, set out as a vet's surgery. Children paint, glue and use different materials to develop collages and pictures.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in reading are well above average and achievement is very good.
- Standards in writing are rising and are above average.
- Teaching is good overall.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good.
- The support for pupils with learning or behaviour difficulties is good.

Commentary

38. Standards by the age of seven are well above average in reading and above average in writing, speaking and listening. In national tests in 2003, standards were above average in reading and average in writing. The preliminary, unvalidated results for the 2004 tests show that standards have risen. They are well above average in reading and above average in writing and this is reflected in the standards seen on inspection. The school exceeded its targets in 2003 and is on course to do so in 2004.
39. At the time of the previous inspection, standards in reading and writing were well above average, but attainment on entry to the school was average. In recent years, assessment of children's attainment on entry to the pre-reception class shows that it is now below average, although children make good progress and enter reception with average standards. The progress pupils make in Year 1 and Year 2 leads to very good achievement in reading and good achievement in writing, speaking and listening, handwriting and spelling, by the age of seven.
40. Pupils with the potential to attain higher standards achieve very well. When the pupils in the current Year 2 classes entered the pre-reception and reception classes there were no children whose attainment was assessed as above average in language and literacy. The preliminary results of national tests in 2004 show that over a third of this group are now reading at Level 3, above the expected level for their age. Tests show that in their writing, up to a fifth of pupils achieve the higher Level 3. This very good achievement is partly due to the school's very good tracking of pupils' progress. This process makes sure that all pupils are challenged at a level that helps them to achieve according to their potential. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because the work is closely matched to their needs and because they get very good support from teaching assistants. Pupils for whom English is an additional language benefit from the school's intensive focus on developing literacy skills and they achieve well.
41. Teaching is good overall and is strongest in the teaching of reading. All pupils read regularly and older pupils use the library confidently to choose books for themselves. The introduction of a new reading scheme has increased the range of fiction and factual books. Guided reading in small groups is helping pupils to develop their understanding of stories, characters and settings. Pupils enjoy looking at books and reading both fiction and non-fiction. In one lesson teaching was unsatisfactory, but the evidence of pupils' work shows that they generally achieve high standards. Teachers' knowledge of their subject is good. They adapt well to new ideas and strategies, for example in the introduction of new approaches to teaching phonics and guided reading. Lessons are

very well planned, with a good use of time and good coverage of the full range of learning expected. Teachers have very high expectations of pupils' behaviour and constantly encourage them to pay good attention, concentrate and work hard. Pupils respond very well and enjoy their work. They listen attentively and make good use of the opportunities they have to give their ideas and opinions in whole-class discussion. They carry out activities with interest and enjoy reading and writing in many different ways. For example, pupils in Year 2 have written stories, reviews of books they have read and carefully sequenced instructions on how to make a sandwich. Overall, the teaching of writing is not yet as effective as the teaching of reading. Resources are good and teachers use them well to interest pupils and stimulate learning.

42. Teachers assess pupils' progress regularly. They make very good use of their knowledge of pupils' capabilities to match the work closely to the needs of groups and individuals. They liaise effectively with class assistants, who provide very good support for pupils with emotional difficulties, as well as those with learning difficulties. This contributes to the good achievement of pupils with special educational needs.
43. The leadership and management of English are good. The current co-ordinator, who has taken over the role very recently, is clear about what needs to be done in terms of monitoring the quality of pupils' work and of teaching. The management of provision for literacy ensures that all pupils have access to a full range of experiences. For example, all pupils take home a book bag but, when parents are unable to read with their children at home, the school arranges for volunteer parents to come and read with pupils, so they all have the advantage of reading to a special adult. In the last two years, the school has done a great deal of work on developing assessment systems and making the best use of the data obtained. The leadership of this project has been good. The school has maintained high quality provision since the previous inspection and has made good improvements in its key aspects. Improvement overall has been good.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

44. The school focuses on the development of literacy skills in all subjects and areas of the curriculum. This reinforces their learning and is a significant factor in pupils' good achievement in literacy. In all lessons, pupils are expected to listen carefully and discuss ideas and findings in order to reinforce their learning. For example, in a Year 1 science lesson, pupils discussed how to classify living and non-living objects, explored evidence of plants in the school grounds and recorded their findings in writing. In a Year 2 history lesson, pupils first listened to a story about native American Indians, then read aloud text displayed on the whiteboard, including key words such as tipi or tepee, buffalo or bison. Finally, they discussed how native American Indians lived and the impact of changes in their environment on their way of life. The school's focus on teaching the correct vocabulary in each subject is a valuable factor in developing pupils' accuracy when talking about their learning.

MATHEMATICS

Provision for mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils attain standards above the national average by the age of seven.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- Higher-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs achieve very well.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to learning mathematics and apply themselves very well.

- Leadership and management of the subject are good, with very good monitoring of teaching and learning.
- The quality of assessment is very good, although there is some inconsistency in teachers' use of targets.
- The use of numeracy skills across the curriculum is under-developed.

Commentary

45. Pupils' attainment at the age of seven was above average in the 2003 national tests, with all pupils reaching at least the expected Level 2. Forty per cent of the pupils reached Level 3, which was well above the national average. Preliminary data for the 2004 tests indicate that this year's results are similar, with pupils exceeding the school's own challenging targets. The data suggest that all pupils will reach at least Level 2, with over a third reaching Level 3, above the 2003 national average. Inspection evidence confirms the evidence of test results. The overall standards are comparable with those at the time of the previous inspection, with better performance by higher-attaining pupils.
46. However, at the time of the previous inspection, children's attainment on entry to the school in the pre-reception class was average and at the end of reception was a little above average. In recent years, assessment of children's attainment on entry to the pre-reception class shows that it is now below average, although children make good progress and enter reception with average standards. Very few children are assessed as having above average attainment at either point of entry. The achievement of all pupils in mathematics is good and the achievement of higher-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs is very good.
47. The quality of teaching and learning is good. All teaching is good or very good. Consequently, many pupils achieve very well and most have very good attitudes towards their work. Every aspect of teaching is strong, but particularly so with regard to planning, teaching methods and management of pupils. Teachers organise a very good range of activities that are well matched to the needs of pupils. Setting in mathematics in Year 2 enables teachers to focus on the needs of pupils with different levels of ability and this contributes significantly to their standards and achievement. Teaching assistants very ably support pupils with special educational needs or for whom English is an additional language. These pupils achieve well and are fully included in the work of the class. The more able enjoy the challenge of quick-fire quizzes, for example, to reinforce their advanced subtraction skills. Teachers also challenge them well by expecting them to explain their mental strategies and by reinforcing mental calculations with well-paced oral tests. Pupils enjoy explaining their thinking. For example, in one lesson, pupils eagerly identified patterns in a sequence of sums adding pairs of numbers. The system for assessment of pupils' attainment is meticulous. The school uses what it learns to track their progress and to set individual targets. This enables teachers to adjust their groups, as well as the curriculum they provide and the methods they use to meet different needs. However, teachers are not consistent in how they explain their targets to pupils, with the result that many pupils are not aware of what they are expected to achieve. There are further discrepancies in the effectiveness of whole-class reviews of lessons, used to consolidate learning, as well as in the extent to which pupils use ICT in mathematics.
48. Leadership and management of mathematics are good. The co-ordinators closely monitor teaching and learning in order to continue to raise standards. They use what they find out very well to provide targets for teachers' professional development and make improvements in provision. These strategies have not, as yet, removed some

inconsistencies in practice. The school has performed well in sustaining continuous improvement since the previous inspection. In particular, the quality of teaching has improved so that there is now no unsatisfactory teaching and a higher proportion of good or very good lessons.

Numeracy across the curriculum

49. The school makes some use of numeracy skills across the curriculum. There are occasional examples, such as pupils' graphs showing different methods of travelling to school in geography and the use of information and communication technology to make graphs of favourite fruit. However, opportunities are overlooked to reinforce mathematical skills as effectively as is done for literacy skills.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' attitudes are very good and they achieve well.
- Teaching is good and stimulates pupils' interest well.
- Learning through investigation is very good.
- Support for pupils with behavioural or learning difficulties is good and they achieve well.
- There is some unevenness in coverage of the curriculum in Year 2.
- Improvement since the previous inspection is good.

Commentary

50. Standards are average for the majority of pupils by the age of seven and a significant number of pupils attain higher standards. In teacher assessments in 2003, standards were average overall, but were well above average in the proportion of pupils who reached Level 3 by the age of seven. The evidence of the inspection shows that the results of the 2004 assessments are likely to be similar.
51. Achievement is good overall and is particularly good for higher-attaining pupils in Years 1 and 2. Pupils respond very well to practical investigations and their enthusiastic attitudes are a significant factor in their good achievement. The support given by teachers, teaching assistants and by other helpers such as the lay chaplain to pupils with behavioural and learning difficulties is a major factor in the good achievement of these pupils. Their care for each pupil ensures good behaviour overall and enables all pupils to learn well. There is good use of ICT in recording the findings of investigations.
52. The quality of teaching is good and pupils learn well. Lesson planning focuses very well on the key knowledge and understanding that pupils are expected to develop, within their capabilities. Activities are well designed to develop understanding and to reinforce scientific knowledge. There is a strong emphasis on learning about living things and about the environment, which is reinforced in other subjects such as geography. The use of investigations is very good. Pupils collect evidence, observe and note similarities and differences, for example between electrical appliances powered from the mains or by battery or between plants in the school grounds. They then record their findings by sorting evidence into categories in a scientific way. Pupils frequently discuss what they have observed with each other and with their teacher or assistants. These discussions help pupils to develop reasoning and speaking skills. The great majority of pupils enjoy joining in and asking questions, as well as answering them. There is some unevenness in the

coverage of topics in Year 2. Older pupils have a wider experience of all aspects of the science curriculum than the younger ones.

53. Leadership and management of science are good. The school has taken effective action in tackling the key issues raised at the previous inspection, related to monitoring pupils' performance and assessing their work. Teachers now assess pupils' work in line with national guidance and the information is used well to track pupils' progress and standards. Improvement has been good, in spite of a slight fall in standards since the previous inspection, which reflects the downward trend in attainment on entry to the school.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning is good, so pupils achieve well.
- The quality of assessment and its use in planning are good.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs or for whom English is an additional language is good.
- Leadership and management are very good in establishing improvement.
- Resources are good and continue to improve.

Commentary

54. By the age of seven, pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills are in line with national expectations. Their keyboard skills enable them to use computers with confidence. Pupils search and use information on CD-ROMs and the Internet, for example to research the Plains Indians of America. They use computers to record their writing and present their findings in investigations graphically. Pupils know how to use decision trees to identify a particular creature. They program robots to carry out a sequence of movements.
55. Teaching is good. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and organise their lessons very well. Lessons are well paced and very efficient in establishing the learning of new skills and consolidating those already learnt. Consequently, pupils thoroughly enjoy ICT and achieve well. In Year 2, for example, the teacher expected pupils to show a degree of independence and self-organisation in surfing the Internet to find out about North American buffalo and how they featured in Indians' lives, for their work in history. Pupils responded by collaborating and applying themselves well to the task. Teachers pair pupils with special educational needs or for whom English is an additional language with others who find computer work relatively easy. This enables them all to be included and achieve well. Well-prepared explanations and sufficient computers enable teachers to give pupils maximum time for learning. The system for assessing pupils' attainment is thorough and enables teachers to plan for individual pupils, providing challenging work so as to build on the skills they have acquired.
56. Leadership and management of ICT are very good. The co-ordinator works hard to improve resources and the curriculum. For example, she has been responsible for working with an outside contractor to make further improvements to resources. As well as establishing the suite, there are plans for some sophisticated networking of computers and establishing more visual aids for teachers, designed to benefit pupils' learning. The two interactive whiteboards are used well and the school plans to purchase more. The co-

ordinator works with teachers in the classroom and discusses with them the training they need. The curriculum is effective in encouraging pupils to understand the use of computers in everyday life. For example, a Year 1 class learned how computers control many machines, including traffic lights. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

57. Teachers make good use of computers to enrich pupils' learning in other subjects. Pupils use programs in their English, mathematics, science, art, geography and history. Some of these programs support learning skills, such as those used in English. Others enable pupils to apply their computer skills for their own purposes, such as recording surveys of eye-colour in mathematics, or in painting. Pupils learn to present their work well as part of understanding the role of computers in communication.

HUMANITIES

Religious education was not inspected on this inspection.

Geography and history

58. There is insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement of the provision in geography and history. Two history lessons were seen, both in Year 2 classes, but none of geography. Samples of pupils' work, on display and in their books, were analysed. Standards are in line with national expectations by the age of seven in both subjects and achievement is satisfactory. Coverage of the curriculum in both subjects is satisfactory. In geography, there is a strong focus on the environment, including the environment of the school. There is good cross-curricular work which links geography, history and other subjects. For example, in geography pupils used their mathematical skills well to create bar charts showing how pupils travel to school. In science pupils looked at the plants and trees growing in the school grounds. On Remembrance Day in 2003 pupils planted poppy seeds which, at the time of the inspection, were coming into flower and pupils remembered what they represented. In history, pupils discussed the impact of environmental changes on the way of life of North American Indians in the nineteenth century.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design, design and technology and physical education

59. There is insufficient evidence to make secure judgements about provision in these subjects. Where possible, pupils' work was scrutinised, either as currently displayed or exemplified in photographs. In addition, pupils were interviewed in order to assess their knowledge and degree of independence in learning. One design and technology lesson and part of two lessons of physical education were observed.
60. In **art and design**, pupils have made effective group murals, showing a good sense of design and colour. Their work based on the art of Matisse is particularly perceptive in capturing the essence of simplicity. Their charcoal observational drawings of fruit show the ability to translate careful observations of the effects of light and texture onto paper. Teachers enhance pupils' experiences by inviting specialists to work with them. This lifts the quality of their work still further; they recently produced some very effectively dyed and painted banners for a future parade to celebrate Roald Dahl's work. Standards are above average. Pupils plan their work in detail and are very aware of the need to modify designs if necessary and to evaluate their own work.
61. In **design and technology**, pupils have designed and made bold puppets, which they have decorated carefully. They have also designed and made highly colourful coats for the Biblical character, Joseph. Standards are above average. Pupils plan their work in detail and are very aware of the need to modify designs if necessary and to evaluate their own work.
62. In the **physical education** lessons seen in Years 1 and 2, pupils achieved standards that were in line with expectations for their ages. The accommodation for physical education is good and includes a hall, playground and field with a large adventure playground where pupils can climb, swing and balance. There are good opportunities for pupils to take part in sporting activities after school. These involve skipping, football and cricket. In addition, specialist coaches are invited in to work with the pupils, enabling them to develop skills and knowledge in football and cricket.

Music

Provision for music is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils attain above the expected standards and achieve well.
- The quality of teaching is very good, so that pupils learn through their enthusiasm to develop new skills
- The specialist teacher leads and manages the subject very well.
- Assessment does not identify specific targets.

Commentary

63. By the age of seven, pupils' standards are above those expected for their age and their achievement is good. They have a good sense of rhythm and confidently improvise phrases over a repeated accompaniment. They sing well, in tune and with a good sense of rhythm. Pupils show control over their voices by changing volume as suits the lines of a

song, without losing the correct pitch. They articulate the words of songs well. Pupils compose effective pieces to create different textures for a sound picture and notate their ideas graphically for future performances. They listen well to one another in order to keep together where appropriate. Listening carefully is also a feature of their appreciation of classical music. Pupils comment in detail about what they notice in pieces like Vivaldi's 'Summer'.

64. The teaching by the specialist teacher is very good. She expects pupils to work very hard and they thoroughly enjoy the challenge of the lessons. Where possible, she encourages pupils to be confident enough to take control. For example, in a lesson about changing volumes, pupils acted as conductors of different groups in creating a class composition to represent a storm. At the same time, the teacher adjusts her planning to meet pupils' different needs. She altered the plan for another class because the pupils were not mature enough to be independent. Lessons have a very good balance of direct teaching and practical activity and are essentially fun. She ensures that pupils develop a wide range of musical skills. The system for assessing pupils' work is satisfactory, but is insufficiently developed to identify specific targets for pupils' learning.
65. Accommodation for music is very good, but resources are insufficient to extend pupils' percussive skills for creating melodies and pupils' responses to music of different ethnic origins. The specialist acts as the subject's co-ordinator and manager. Her leadership and management of the subject are very good. She has maintained the high standards in music that were noted at the previous inspection.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

66. No direct teaching of personal, social, and health education were observed on the inspection. The school's planning for this area of work was scrutinised and the evidence on display, in photographic portfolios and in discussion with pupils, was assessed. The school places a high priority on developing all aspects of pupils' personal education. Pupils' social and moral development is very good and the care the school provides for all pupils contributes strongly to their good achievement across the school. The Star Awards system is a very effective way of setting high expectations of pupils' attitudes and behaviour and of rewarding their achievement in many ways. Pupils are keen to do well and are excited about their awards, which are celebrated at a weekly assembly.
67. Provision across the curriculum has been carefully mapped and teachers and assistants work very well together in promoting this aspect of education. In the Foundation Stage, teachers use 'circle time', when children come together to talk about concerns and feelings, to help children to explore relationships and their own actions. Children respond very well, with developing awareness of how their own actions affect others. In Years 1 and 2 teachers and assistants are quick to make the most of opportunities for similar discussions. Pupils learn about health issues through their work on living things in science. The library contains books about 'Me and my body' and about animals and their young. Much work on personal and social education takes place through the medium of religious education, which was inspected by a diocesan team under section 23 of the School Inspections Act (1996). The school prospectus sets out the governors' statement that they believe that sex education for children of infant school age is primarily the responsibility of parents.

68. The school gathers photographic evidence of children's participation in many activities, which help them to develop responsibility and a sense of contributing to the community. An example was the planting of poppies in the school's garden by pupils last November, for Remembrance Day. In an outdoor science lesson, two Year 1 boys observed the poppies, now coming into flower. One said to the other, "they're there because people died", and both behaved with respect.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	1
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	4
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	2
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	2
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).