

INSPECTION REPORT

ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Boughton, Newark

LEA area: Nottinghamshire

Unique reference number: 122822

Headteacher: Mrs A Blake

Lead inspector: Mr K Williams

Dates of inspection: 24th – 26th May 2004

Inspection number: 257740

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| Type of school: | Primary |
| School category: | Voluntary aided |
| Age range of pupils: | 3 - 11 |
| Gender of pupils: | Mixed |
| Number on roll: | 168 |
| School address: | Main Road Boughton Newark Nottinghamshire |
| Postcode: | NG22 9JE |
| Telephone number: | 01623 860392 |
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| Appropriate authority: | Governing body |
| Name of chair of governors: | Father Phillip Holland |
| Date of previous inspection: | July 1998 |

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St Joseph's is a Catholic Primary School situated in the village of Boughton, Nottinghamshire, an area with significant deprivation. There are 168 pupils on roll, which is smaller than average. The pupils join the nursery in the term after their third birthday. The attainment of pupils on entry to the school covers a wide range but, overall, is broadly average. Almost all of the pupils are of white ethnic background and no pupil is learning English as an additional language. About nine per cent of the pupils are from Travellers' families. Forty-one pupils have been identified with special educational needs, including two who have a Statement of Special Educational Needs. Just over 11 per cent of the pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is broadly average. The school received the national School Achievement Award in 2001 and 2002. The headteacher has been in post since September 2003.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Members of the inspection team | | | Subject responsibilities |
|--------------------------------|------------------|----------------|--|
| 21074 | Keith Williams | Lead inspector | Mathematics; information and communication technology; design and technology (ICT); physical education |
| 9837 | Roy Walsh | Lay inspector | |
| 29380 | Sally Noble | Team inspector | English; art and design; history; special educational needs |
| 22884 | Sandra Sutcliffe | Team inspector | Foundation Stage; science, geography; music |

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School provides a **satisfactory standard of education**; the leadership, management and teaching are satisfactory overall. The children make a good start in the Foundation Stage and achieve well. They continue to make good progress in Years 1 and 2, achieve well and, by the end of Year 2, standards are above average in mathematics and well above average in reading and writing. The pupils' achievement in Years 3 to 6, where there has been a high turnover of staff and significant disruption to the teaching, is satisfactory overall, although the more able pupils could do better. By the end of Year 6, standards are average in the core subjects. Standards are rising, but they could still be higher. The pupils with special educational needs (SEN) achieve well across the school. Overall, the school gives satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The headteacher has a clear vision for the school and, with the staff and governors, has created a positive ethos in which all pupils are valued and those with SEN are well supported
- The children in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 achieve well because the teaching is consistently good
- Although standards in the core subjects are rising, they could still be higher in Years 3 to 6, particularly amongst the more able pupils
- The pupils have very positive attitudes, behave very well and their personal development is very good
- There are too few opportunities for the pupils to use their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in other subjects
- The pupils are not sufficiently involved in assessing their work and there are too few procedures for tracking their progress across all subjects
- Literacy and numeracy are well led and managed, but the co-ordination of other subjects is underdeveloped

Overall, the school has made satisfactory progress since it was last inspected in July 1998. Standards in the core subjects are higher at the end of Year 2 and they are rising at the end of Year 6, although they could still be higher. Standards in ICT have also risen, although there is still more to be done to improve the use of computers in other subjects. Those weaknesses identified in the leadership and management, particularly the governors' role in reviewing the school's progress, have been addressed, but there remain shortcomings in the co-ordination of many subjects. The school's financial management is now good.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

In the table above, E* means that the results were among the lowest five per cent nationally. Inspection evidence confirms that, overall, pupils' **achievement is satisfactory**. The children in the Foundation Stage achieve well. Most are on course to achieve the goals expected of them by the end of Reception in mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world and they are likely to exceed those goals in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, physical and creative development. The pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well

and, by the end of Year 2, standards are well above average in English and they are above average in mathematics. The achievement of the pupils in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory. In Year 6, standards in English, mathematics, science and ICT are average, and higher than they were in last year's national tests for Year 6. More could be expected of the more able pupils in Years 3 to 6 and they occasionally underachieve. Across the school, those pupils with SEN achieve well. Standards are in line with what is expected in

The pupils' **personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is very good.** They have very positive attitudes to school and their behaviour is very good. The attendance rate during the previous year was very low; the rate has improved for the current year and is satisfactory overall. The pupils are punctual.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a **satisfactory quality of education.** The **teaching is satisfactory** overall and, in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2, it is good. The teaching is more variable in Years 3 to 6 and, whilst it is satisfactory overall, it does not always challenge the more able pupils. There is consistently good teaching in Years 4 and 5. Across the school, the pupils with SEN benefit from the support they receive from teachers and teaching assistants and they make good progress. There are new arrangements to track the progress of pupils in English and mathematics, but the pupils themselves are not yet clear about how to improve their work and the assessment procedures in other subjects are underdeveloped.

The school provides a satisfactory curriculum, with a very good emphasis on the pupils' spiritual, moral and social development, but there are too few opportunities for the pupils to develop their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in other subjects. There is a good range of activities to enrich the curriculum. The care and welfare of the pupils is good and the school makes satisfactory use of assessment information to provide advice and guidance to the pupils. The school benefits from good links with parents, the local community and other schools.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The **leadership and management of the school are satisfactory.** The new headteacher has quickly gained an understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and has a clear vision for how it should improve. She is well supported by governors and a team of committed and hard working staff. As a result, the school has a positive ethos and pupils of all backgrounds are valued. Standards are rising, particularly in English and mathematics, although the school recognises that there is still more to be done in Years 3 to 6. Literacy and numeracy are well led and managed but the co-ordination of other subjects is underdeveloped. The governance of the school is satisfactory; the governors ensure that all statutory requirements are met and finances are well managed.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Most parents and pupils have very positive views of the school. The parents are particularly pleased that their children like school and are making good progress. They have confidence in the way that the school is led and managed and feel that their views are taken into account. The pupils feel valued and are confident that there is an adult they could turn to if they had a problem.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Continue to raise standards in the core subjects, ensuring that the more able pupils are sufficiently challenged, particularly in Years 3 to 6
- Increase the opportunities for the pupils to use literacy, numeracy and ICT in other subjects
- Involve the pupils more in the assessment of their work and ensure that their progress is tracked in all subjects
- Improve the co-ordination of subjects

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

The evidence of the inspection confirms that the pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. The children in the Foundation Stage achieve well. Most are on course to achieve or exceed the goals expected of them by the end of Reception. The pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well and, by the end of Year 2, standards are well above average in English and they are above average in mathematics. The achievement of the pupils in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory. By the end of Year 6, standards in English, mathematics and science are average. More could be expected of the more able pupils in Years 3 to 6 and they occasionally underachieve. Across the school, those pupils with special educational needs achieve well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children in the nursery make a good start to their education and this good progress continues in Reception and Years 1 and 2
- Standards are rising in Years 3 to 6, but they could still be higher and the more able pupils could achieve more
- The pupils with special educational needs make good progress because they receive good support

Commentary

1. The school's results in the 2003 National Curriculum tests for pupils in Year 2 were above average in reading and mathematics and well above average in writing. When compared with schools in similar circumstances, the results in reading were above average, while those for writing and mathematics were well above average. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 in writing was above average and it was similar to other schools in reading and mathematics. The results over recent years have been improving at a better rate than the national picture and at a faster rate than for those pupils in Year 6.

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

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| reading | 16.6 (16.1) | 15.7 (15.8) |
| writing | 16.3 (15.9) | 14.6 (14.4) |
| mathematics | 17.3 (17.3) | 16.3 (16.5) |

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

2. In Year 6, in 2003, the national test results were well below average in English and mathematics and below average in science. When compared with similar schools, the results were well below average in English and science and they were amongst the lowest five per cent nationally in mathematics. The proportion achieving the higher Level 5 was very low. With considerable variation between consecutive years, results have been mixed over recent years, although those for English and mathematics in 2003 were lower than in previous years.

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

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| English | 25.4 (28.2) | 26.8 (27.0) |
| mathematics | 24.0 (25.9) | 26.8 (26.7) |
| science | 27.5 (27.0) | 28.6 (28.3) |

There were 22 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3. The children's attainment when they first join the nursery covers a broad range and it varies from year to year, but it is average overall. The good provision, teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage mean that the children achieve well. Most are on course to achieve the goals expected of them by the end of Reception in mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world and they are likely to exceed those goals in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, physical and creative development.
4. After this good start, the pupils continue to achieve well in Years 1 and 2 and, by the end of Year 2, standards are above average in mathematics and science and well above average in English. Standards have improved since the last inspection. This is because the basic skills are well taught: the teaching of writing, in particular, is very well organised and there are many opportunities for the pupils to write at length. The teachers' planning ensures that the more able pupils are given more difficult work, so that they, too, make good progress and achieve well. Standards are in line with what is expected of pupils at the end of Year 2 in information and communication technology and physical education. There is insufficient evidence to make judgements about standards in other subjects.
5. Standards are rising, too, in Years 3 to 6 and the work of the current pupils in Year 6 shows that they are achieving at a higher level than indicated by last year's national test results. By the end of Year 6, standards are average in English, mathematics and science. The achievement of most pupils is satisfactory and they have made rapid progress in the past year, particularly in English and mathematics. The staff have made good use of the intensive support and advice given by the local education authority advisory service. The planning for lessons has improved and there is a much stronger focus on identifying what is to be learned and sharing this information with the pupils. Occasionally, though, the more able pupils in these year groups do not make sufficient progress because too little is expected of them. For example, they are sometimes expected to carry out similar work to other pupils or, when separate activities are planned they are sometimes at too low a level for these more capable pupils. In these cases, the more able pupils underachieve.
6. Standards are in line with what is expected of pupils at the end of Year 6 in information and communication technology and physical education. Standards in ICT have improved since the last inspection because of the improved planning and resources and the teachers' increased knowledge and confidence in the subject. In PE, a significant minority of the pupils perform at a high level. A good range of extra-curricular activities enhances their progress.
7. The school is successful at meeting the needs of the pupils with special educational needs. Suitable activities are planned and extra support is identified for those who need it. As a result, the pupils with special educational needs across the school make good progress and achieve well. The teaching assistants make a good contribution to their learning.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

The pupils have very positive attitudes to school. Their behaviour and personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are very good overall. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils enjoy coming to school, feel secure, are keen to learn and behave very well
- Relationships, based on mutual respect and courtesy, are very harmonious
- The provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good, although more could be done to increase their awareness of other cultures

Commentary

8. The pupils of all ages, backgrounds and abilities, including those with special educational needs, are eager to learn. They enjoy coming to school, show a keen interest in all that is going on and respond eagerly in most lessons. The pupils, including the very youngest children in the school, are attentive, co-operative and collaborate well together. They readily accept the idea that they both learn from, and help each other. These positive attitudes result in generally very good behaviour and the school is a calm, orderly place. Lunchtimes are pleasant, social occasions and playtime is enjoyed by all. On the occasions when the lessons lack interest and challenge, however, a few pupils become restless and do not learn as much as they should. There is no evidence of bullying, racist behaviour or harassment and those pupils with significant special needs are willingly accepted and treated with kindness and respect. The parents feel that the school deals quickly and effectively with minor incidents when they arise. The school radiates a pleasant atmosphere, which encourages harmonious relationships amongst the pupils, adults and the wider community.
9. The school builds well on the pupils' positive attitudes and makes very good provision for their spiritual, moral and social development. In assemblies the pupils' spiritual awareness is raised through reflection of how everyone is special. They gain further spiritual awareness through their work in art and literature. Assemblies also provide good opportunities for the pupils to explore moral issues and they clearly understand the difference between right and wrong. They are very willing to accept responsibility and they take their work on the school council very seriously. The council, run entirely by the pupils themselves, gives them a strong sense of citizenship, especially in relation to representing and acting upon the views of others. As part of the caring ethos, the pupils happily undertake many jobs around the school, some of which involve care and support by older pupils for the younger ones. The pupils themselves raise money for the developing world through C.A.F.O.D. (Catholic Association for Overseas Development) by organising fund raising functions amongst themselves, such as talent shows and video nights. They visit Bishops Court, a home for elderly people where, as well as celebrating Harvest and Christmas with them, a recent project has involved the pupils working with a local artist to create a path from the school to Bishops Court. The Years 4 to 6 residential trip to Grasmere supports the development of the pupils' social and teamwork skills.
10. Through art, religious education and dance, drama or music workshops, the pupils' are given experiences that stimulate an appreciation of their own and other cultures. Two Japanese students spent time in school and helped the pupils understand much about the culture of Japan. Good use is made of museums, galleries and other places of interest. There is too little emphasis, however, on developing the pupils' understanding of the richness and contribution of other cultures and there is little celebration of the diversity of other cultures in the planned curriculum.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

| Authorised absence | |
|--------------------|------|
| School data | 10.5 |
| 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.

11. The authorised absence rate at the school for the academic year 2002/03 was very high in comparison with other schools nationally, adversely affecting the learning and attainment of a substantial number of pupils. Following analysis in September 2003 it was recognised that the major cause of absence was pupils being removed during term time for family holidays and the impact of the transitory nature of the traveller culture. Since that time attendance rates have risen dramatically due to initiatives taken by the school. The 'Tick Tock' challenge was introduced in a whole school effort to reverse the poor rate. This rewarded the class with the best percentage attendance, over a three week period, and certificates were awarded to individual pupils who gained 100 per cent attendance. This initiative proved very successful and has been extended to provide certificates each half term as well as awarding a trophy at the end of the school year. The new attendance policy is written in parent-friendly language and is to be combined with the school's Home-School Agreement which parents must sign and return to school. Newsletters reinforce the importance of good attendance and parents of poor attendees are invited to a meeting at the school. These activities have significantly improved attendance levels to the extent that absences are currently slightly below the national average. There was one exclusion during the last year.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

| Categories used in the Annual School Census |
|---|
| White – British |
| White – any other White background |
| Any other ethnic group |

| No of pupils on roll |
|----------------------|
| 129 |
| 7 |
| 1 |

| Number of fixed period exclusions | Number of permanent exclusions |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 |

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a satisfactory quality of education. The teaching, learning and curriculum are satisfactory and the care, welfare, health and safety of the pupils are good. There are good links with parents, the local community and with other schools.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and there are satisfactory procedures for assessing the pupils' attainment.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching and learning are good in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 and these pupils achieve well
- More could be expected of the more able pupils in Years 3 to 6

- The pupils are not sufficiently involved in assessing their work and they need more information about how well they are doing and how they can improve
- The teaching and support staff ensure that the pupils with special educational needs are able to play a full part in lessons and make progress

Commentary

12. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. Within this picture there is variability across the school. The teaching in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2 is good and this has a significant impact on the progress made by these pupils and on their achievement. The teaching in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory overall and it is consistently good in the Year 4 and 5 class.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 34 lessons

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|----------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| 0 | 3 (9%) | 15 (44%) | 14 (43%) | 2 (6%) | 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.

13. The teachers in the Foundation Stage have a clear understanding of how these young children learn. The staff use their skills well to help the children settle into school and to benefit from the broad range of activities presented to them. There is a good balance between those activities directed by the staff and those chosen by the children. A high priority is given to promoting the children's personal and social skills and their language and literacy development. Assessment is rigorous and is used carefully to build on the children's previous learning and provides well focussed support. This ensures that the children learn successfully. Good relationships between parents, children and staff are established, so that the children are confident and happy. There are high expectations of what can be achieved and these children make good progress.
14. This good start is built upon successfully in Year 1. The pupils achieve well and, by the end of Year 2, standards are above those expected in mathematics and well above expectations in English. Reading, writing and number are taught systematically and the planning for literacy and numeracy takes good account of the differing needs of the pupils. Those pupils capable of attaining the higher levels are challenged to do so, often by working from the plans intended for older pupils, and they achieve well. Across the school, the pupils with special educational needs are taught well. The lessons are planned well to meet their needs. The teaching assistants provide good support for the pupils in lessons and when they work in small groups.
15. The school's focus on raising standards of literacy and numeracy is proving successful because the teachers are clear about what will be learned in lessons and, in the main, ensure that the pupils understand what they are about to learn and why it is important. These objectives are displayed prominently in most of the classrooms and, in the best lessons, they are referred to regularly and used to reinforce the pupils' understanding. In some lessons in Years 3 to 6, however, the planning does not take sufficient account of the needs of the more able pupils, and they are usually expected to cover similar work to other pupils. This lack of challenge means that these pupils frequently underachieve. For example, in a mathematics lesson in Years 3 and 4, although work was planned for different ability groups, it was at too low a level to challenge the more able. In English, more could be expected of these pupils. They are not given enough guidance or time to improve their work to the standards they are capable of reaching.
16. New assessment arrangements have been implemented for English and mathematics and they are beginning to provide the information that the teachers need to track the pupils' progress, identify strengths and weaknesses and set targets for individuals and groups of pupils. Marking is generally good across the school and, in the best examples, informs the pupils of how they can improve. However, this is not a consistent feature in all classes and, overall, the pupils

receive too little information about how well they are doing and what they need to do to reach the next level. There are few examples of the pupils being involved in assessing their own work. These have been identified as areas for development by the school. The use of assessment in other subjects is limited and too little use is made of assessment information to plan the next stage of the pupils' learning and ensure that their knowledge, skills and understanding in each subject builds on their previous work.

The curriculum

The school provides a satisfactory curriculum that is supported by a good range of extra-curricular activities. The quality of accommodation and resources is satisfactory overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The provision for those pupils with special educational needs is good
- Too little time is spent on some of the foundation subjects
- There are too few opportunities to develop literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) in other subjects
- There is a good range of opportunities, including after-school clubs, to enrich the pupils' experiences

Commentary

17. The school values the contribution of all pupils, regardless of background or ability. The pupils with special educational needs, including those with physical, emotional and learning needs, are well integrated into all aspects of school life. The planning is well matched to their needs and additional support is deployed carefully. Individual education plans give a clear indication of each pupil's strengths and targets and are carefully maintained. As a result of this good provision, the pupils with special educational needs achieve well.
18. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. It meets the pupils' needs well and helps them make good progress. The emphasis on personal and social development helps the children become confident and well motivated learners and this has a positive impact upon their progression and achievement. Many opportunities are provided for learning through play and the curriculum is enriched through a wide range of visits both locally and further afield. These visits make a good contribution to the development of the children's knowledge and understanding of the world. However, there are too few opportunities to develop the children's natural curiosity and sense of enquiry in other areas of learning.
19. The curriculum in Years 1 to 6 meets statutory requirements and the school makes suitable arrangements for the pupils' personal, social and health education, which includes sex education and drug awareness. The school has rightly placed a high priority on raising standards in English and mathematics and with strong leadership from the headteacher and intensive support from the local education authority, this has played a significant part in the improving standards. The co-ordinators of these subjects have ensured greater consistency in the planning, delivery and assessment.
20. This emphasis on literacy and numeracy has led to an imbalance in the curriculum and too little time is spent on some of the foundation subjects, particularly design and technology, geography and history. While the curriculum broadly follows the national guidelines, there are instances of pupils in the mixed age classes repeating some elements of the work and others areas that are not fully covered. This limits the opportunities for the pupils to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding in these subjects and there is little of the pupils' previous work upon which to make judgements about standards. The school is beginning to make meaningful links between subjects. For example, the Year 3 and 4 pupils recently made Egyptian masks as part of their history studies and then used their knowledge of instructional writing, learned in English lessons,

to record the steps taken to make the model. Generally, however, there are too few opportunities for the pupils to use and develop their literacy, numeracy and ICT in other subjects.

21. There are good opportunities for pupils to be involved in sports and the arts. The school provides a wide range of visits to places of significance, such as residential visits to outdoor environmental and physical activity centres, visits to Lincoln Castle and the Museum of Rural Life. A group of parents run a well organised and popular art club. Some of the pupils receive tuition from visiting music teachers and there is a good range of extra curricular clubs and activities.
22. At the time of the last inspection, there were weaknesses relating to the school's accommodation: these have been addressed fully.

Care, guidance and support

The provision for the pupils' care, welfare and health and safety is good and the school provides satisfactory support and advice. There are good procedures for seeking and acting on the pupils' views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides a high level of care within a safe environment, which encourages pupils to do their best
- Very good relationships exist between staff and pupils
- The pupils are well involved in the life of the school

Commentary

23. The good level of care and welfare provided for the pupils is a strength of the school. There are very good relationships between the staff and the pupils and they know them and their families well. The school welcomes Traveller pupils with warmth and support. The vast majority of pupils report that they feel comfortable turning to adults for help or advice. The staff are well aware of the school's child protection procedures and who the designated co-ordinator is. Competent arrangements exist for dealing with minor accidents and administering medicines during school times. Breaks and lunchtimes are well supervised and any problems are handled consistently well. Regular health and safety inspections take place and risk assessments are completed, both for internal activities, outside visits and residential trips. Parents value and appreciate the good pastoral care their children receive.
24. Pupils of all ages are keen to get involved in the life of the school. They gladly offer assistance and are very willing helpers in carrying out tasks for the benefit of the school. There is an effective school council, with democratically elected representatives from each class. It meets weekly and the members are responsible for chairing the meetings and recording the minutes. As well as discussions about play equipment, the council also addresses matters such as dealing with unacceptable behaviour and organising fund raising events. The members of the school council take their jobs seriously and believe that the school listens to their views and opinions. The vast majority of pupils are very proud of their school and very willing to take on extra responsibilities such as helping at lunchtimes. Older pupils, in particular, often help the younger ones.
25. Across the school, induction arrangements for new pupils, and those returning after long periods of absence, are comprehensive and ensure they settle quickly into school routines. In the Foundation Stage there are very good arrangements for new arrivals that enable both parents and children to be confident of the high standard of care provided by the school. Residential activities extend the learning horizons of pupils in Years 4 to 6 and are very much enjoyed and looked forward to by the pupils. The annual visit to Grasmere assists in building the pupils' independence, confidence and self-esteem.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents, the community and other schools are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school's liaison with parents is good and the parents find staff very approachable
- Strong links have been developed with the local community and church
- The good links with partner institutions contribute well to the pupils' achievements

Commentary

26. The school is developing a strong partnership with its parents. The parents, in return, are very supportive of the school and have confidence in the way the school is being led and managed. They find staff open and approachable and that any concerns are dealt with quickly and competently. The school uses questionnaires, formal evenings and informal chats, to canvass parents' views and willingly considers any suggestions made. The parents have very positive views of most aspects of the school's work. Some concern was noted from a small number of parents regarding levels of homework. Whilst inspection evidence indicates that homework arrangements are generally good, the school is aware of these opinions and is reviewing its current provision. Parents are encouraged to attend school events, especially assemblies and mass, and a small number of parents work voluntarily in school: those seen during the inspection were helping with PE and running an after school art club. This help is very much appreciated by the school. Governors are well known by parents and are happy to act as a channel of communication between parents and the school. An active parents' group organises fund raising and social events and has recently contributed to extra books and computer equipment.
27. Regular newsletters, written in accessible and friendly language, provide parents with essential information on school activities and the annual reports on pupils' progress, although brief, are well written and informative. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are consulted on their children's individual educational plan and are kept informed of progress towards their targets.
28. Links with the local community are good. Course for adults, such as those where the adults produce 'story sacks' help to give an extra dimension to the pupils' reading. Parish members often participate in school mass and school productions at Christmas and Easter and good links are forged with the local Traveller community. The school's first contact with this community is particularly warm and positive and leads to a long lasting and trusting partnership. There are good links with the partner secondary schools. Visits help Year 6 pupils gain confidence and make contact with their new teachers and there are joint events and staff training activities. These contacts provide an interesting range of activities and enable the pupils to develop friendships with those from other schools. The teaching staff foster good relationships with other local primary schools by sharing good teaching practice and providing advice on issues such as attendance and behaviour management.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership, management and governance of the school are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher, well supported by the staff and governors, has a clear vision of how the school should develop and improve

- The school has a positive ethos in which all of the pupils are valued, whatever their background or needs
- The role of subject co-ordinators is underdeveloped
- The financial management of the school is good

Commentary

29. The new headteacher has quickly built up a clear picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses and an understanding of what needs to be done to improve. Since her appointment, and following a period of disruption to the staffing, she has built a team of committed and hard working teachers and support staff, who are determined to raise standards and improve the quality of education. The school has rightly focused on raising standards in English and mathematics, particularly in Years 3 to 6. They have responded well to the intensive support provided by the LEA and, as a result, standards are rising in these subjects. Given the good achievement in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2, the school recognises that there is still more to be done. Teamwork is encouraged and the staff have responded to this very positively. The head and senior staff have formed an effective partnership. A programme of monitoring has been initiated, mainly in English and mathematics, which includes looking at the teachers' planning, the pupils' books and the work that takes place in lessons. Leadership of the Foundation Stage is good. There is a strong emphasis on shared planning and regular communication with parents. Liaison between the staff in the nursery and the Reception class is good.
30. The school promotes racial equality well and has a clear commitment to valuing all of the pupils, whatever their individual needs or backgrounds. As a result, the pupils have good attitudes to their work, they behave well and there is a secure and positive working environment. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is well managed. The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) knows the children well and plays a lead role in reviewing the progress made by these pupils. The parents and pupils are involved in setting the targets in the pupils' individual educational plans. The provision for other members of the school community, for example Traveller children, is well managed. The school has effective links with the specialist staff who support these children and this makes a positive contribution to the progress and achievement of these pupils. The pupils enjoy school, safe in the knowledge that they are welcomed and well cared for. Pupils of all abilities benefit from the enthusiastic and capable teaching assistants who support in many classes.
31. Whilst the focus over the past year has been on raising standards in the core subjects, the school recognises that there has been little development in some other subjects. New co-ordinators have been appointed but, with the exception of the co-ordinators for literacy and numeracy, they have had little opportunity to increase their awareness of standards in their subjects and identify strengths and weaknesses. A consequence of this is that too little time is spent on some of the subjects, particularly design and technology, geography and history. Whilst it is not possible to make judgements about standards in these subjects, this lack of emphasis has limited the progress made by the pupils. This has also reduced the opportunities for the pupils to use and improve their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills.
32. The governors know what the school is doing well and are actively involved, through the work of committees and the participation of individual governors in the life of the school, in identifying areas for improvement. They have provided strong leadership and support during a period of significant change and have ensured that most of the weaknesses identified in the last inspection have been addressed. The work to improve the provision and standards in Reception and Years 1 and 2 has been particularly successful and standards are now well above average in English and above average in mathematics by the end of Year 2. Standards in ICT have also risen, although there is still more to be done to improve the use of computers in other subjects. Weaknesses identified in the leadership and management have largely been addressed, particularly the governors' role in reviewing the school's progress. There remain shortcomings in the co-ordination of many subjects. A significant improvement has been secured in the

school's financial management, which is now good. Over recent years the school has worked systematically to reduce a significant overspend and, through prudent spending, is now operating with a small contingency fund.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

| Income and expenditure (£) | |
|----------------------------|---------|
| Total income | 484,217 |
| Total expenditure | 469,285 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 2,914 |

| Balances (£) | |
|-------------------------------------|--------|
| Balance from previous year | -7,649 |
| Balance carried forward to the next | 10,110 |

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

33. The attainment of the children when they enter the nursery varies but is broadly average overall. The children achieve well. Most are on course to achieve the goals expected of them by the end of Reception in mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world and they are likely to exceed those goals in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, physical and creative development. A significant strength is the very good provision for personal, social and emotional development. There are good relationships with parents and this enables the children to settle in well. Links are particularly good with the Traveller community, where first links with school are very positive. The teaching and learning are good. The teachers and support staff form an effective team and the key skills are taught well. Assessment is detailed and ensures that the individual needs of the children are well met.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching is consistently good so that the children achieve well
- The very good relationships amongst the children, parents and staff help the children to feel secure and valued and develop independence and self confidence
- The children co-operate well with each other and with the adults who work with them
- They develop a good understanding of what is right and wrong

Commentary

34. The school places a high priority on developing this area of learning and all members of staff have high expectations. As a result, the children achieve well and are on target to exceed the goals expected of them by the end of Reception. Many of the children join the Nursery with little experience of organised settings, but they soon settle happily, choosing and working at the activities confidently. Relationships are very good and the children listen attentively and respond well to the adults. They have positive attitudes and are keen to take part in all of the activities. In Reception, the children are able to follow instructions and sustain concentration for long periods of time. They respect and care for each other; this is very evident when taking part in games where they co-operate, share and take turns without needing adult intervention.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching of writing is very good and the children achieve very well and make very good progress
- The early skills of reading are well taught
- Speaking skills are promoted well through conversation with the children individually or in small groups
- Assessment procedures are detailed and used well to meet the children's individual needs

Commentary

35. The children achieve well and are on course to exceed the goals they are expected to meet by the end of Reception. The generous ratio of adults to children in the Nursery is used well to ensure that all of the children are given attention and the staff encourage them to use interesting vocabulary. Close links are established between home and school and this helps promote the enjoyment of reading books. Writing is taught very systematically, particularly in Reception, with most children writing independently by the time they enter Year 1. Good links are established between Nursery and Reception and the effective assessment procedures ensure that each child works through a personal programme of development. For instance, children in their final term in the Nursery follow a focussed reading and writing programme so that they are able to make the transition into the Reception class smoothly.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

- Basic number skills are reinforced at every opportunity especially through games
- There is a clear emphasis on the development of mathematical language
- There are too few opportunities for the children to use their growing mathematical awareness in other areas of learning

Commentary

36. The children are on course to achieve the goals expected of them by the time they enter Year 1 and their progress is satisfactory. The teachers' use of songs, rhymes and counting games to help make the learning of numbers fun has a positive effect on the children's progress. They learn the importance of 'touch and count' to ensure accuracy in counting when using a variety of apparatus. Games such as 'Incy Wincy Spider' in the Nursery and 'Leap Frog' in Reception are very much enjoyed by the children and provide effective learning activities. The correct use of mathematical language by the adults ensures that the children's mathematical knowledge and understanding develop well. A small group of more able children in Reception are working on numbers up to 100. Where there is adult supervision, the teaching is very effective and children achieve well. Occasionally, however, some unsupervised group activities lack focus and little new learning takes place. There are few opportunities for the children to use number across the curriculum such as in the role play areas.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children have a good awareness of their immediate environment
- The provision is enriched by a good range of outside visits
- The links made with other areas of learning are underdeveloped
- There are too few planned opportunities for the children to use computers

Commentary

37. The children in the nursery make satisfactory progress in this area of learning and are on course to achieve the goals expected of them. These children are becoming increasingly aware of life and growth by observing tadpoles and growing sunflowers. There are a very good range of visits planned. Some are local, for example Sherwood Forest and White Post Farm, while others are further afield, such as visits to the seaside or Twycross Zoo. The children's families are invited on some of these visits. These trips widen the children's experiences, knowledge and personal

and social skills and help to promote home-school relationships. In school, however, there are too few links made with other areas of learning, for example to stimulate the children's natural curiosity and sense of enquiry. Similarly, there is often no planned use of computers to support the children's learning or to help them acquire keyboard skills systematically.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a carefully structured programme of activities to help develop the children's confidence, independence and dexterity
- The outdoor facilities for the Reception class are limited

Commentary

38. The children are on course to exceed the goals expected of them by the end of Reception. The teaching is good and the children achieve well. Outdoor play opportunities in the Nursery are carefully planned to ensure that the children experience a broad range of activities, despite the limited amount of large play apparatus. Fun elements such as 'Spot the Ladybird' keep children motivated and on task. They show good dexterity and co-operation as they use tools and equipment. The children in the Nursery are individually taught how to put on and fasten their coats. There is no designated play area for Reception children, however, and no large play apparatus, thus limiting their range of experience and the skills taught. A comprehensive scheme of work, however, ensures good coverage and progression through this area of learning.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children experience a good range of creative activities that include art, music and imaginative play
- Their learning is enhanced by visits and visitors to the school

Commentary

39. Most of the children are likely to exceed the goals they are expected to reach by the time they enter Year 1. The children enjoy their music lessons, experimenting with many musical instruments and using them sensitively to tell the story of the Hungry Caterpillar. They can follow simple notation of 'soft', 'loud' and 'still' and they listen to instructions well, following them carefully and accurately. Many art activities involving painting, printing, sticking and drawing with different media are available to the children for most of the time and they are encouraged to participate and discuss their work. Many are able to sustain concentration and they take pride in their finished products. Visitors to the school, such as the Roundabout Theatre, or visits to the theatre, such as the Jack and the Beanstalk Theatre, are enjoyed by the children. The children have also worked with musical groups and circus performers.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above average by the end of Year 2
- The focus on improving writing in Years 3 to 6 is proving successful and standards are rising, but the pupils need more information about how they can improve their work
- The teachers do not always expect enough of the more able children
- There are too few opportunities to develop literacy in other subjects
- The subject co-ordinator has established a good overview of standards and a sensible plan to improve provision

Commentary

40. Standards in English are well above average by the end Year 2 and they are average by the end of Year 6. High standards are achieved in Years 1 and 2 because handwriting is taught systematically, the pupils are encouraged to write at length, and the skills of reading and writing are taught well in whole class and small group sessions. Standards in Years 1 and 2 have improved considerably since the last inspection. Standards in writing for the older pupils in Year 3 to 6 have improved significantly in the last year, but they could still be higher, particularly for some of the more able pupils, who are not always given work that is sufficiently demanding.
41. The priority to improve the pupils' writing has led to higher standards. Most of the pupils now achieve at the levels expected of them and they have a good grasp of different forms of writing. The teachers provide the pupils with regular opportunities to learn from, and write in, different styles and formats. The work on spelling and grammar is linked to the writing process and this gives the pupils a clear purpose for their work. The teachers carefully assess the pupils' progress in reading and writing but the pupils are not yet able to evaluate their own progress. For example, the teachers' marking of writing is good but there is little evidence that the pupils systematically act on the targets for improvement.
42. Throughout the school, the pupils are competent at expressing their ideas and they enjoy conversations with other children and with adults. The teachers encourage high quality discussions and they use questions well to challenge ideas and to check understanding. The pupil's behaviour is very mature at these times: they listen well and are sensitive to other points of view. By the end of Year 6, many of the pupils use mature language to express their feelings, and experiences.
43. Throughout the school, the pupils enjoy reading and this has a positive impact on their achievement and ensures that they make steady progress as they move through the school. They develop an appropriate range of strategies for reading new words and the teachers plan a range of interesting activities to help improve their understanding of texts. Those pupils with special educational needs are well supported and are encouraged to improve. For example, a group of pupils' in Year 6 explored personal points of view, based on the fictional text 'Kensuke's Kingdom'. They prepared questions to ask each other in a role play 'hot-seat' session. Individual pupils were then given the opportunity to empathise with the main character as they assumed the role of a child washed up on an island in the Pacific Ocean.
44. The teaching is satisfactory overall with good teaching seen during the small group reading and writing sessions in the literacy lessons. The strongest teaching was observed in Year 1 and in the Year 4 and 5 class, where the tasks were clearly explained, targets for improvement were identified and the teachers used a range of open-ended questions to assess the pupils' understanding. All of the pupils, regardless of their ability, made good progress in these lessons.

The teaching was less successful where lesson introductions were too long and the teacher failed to explain the standard, quantity or quality of work expected. Occasionally, all of the pupils are expected to do the same work and the progress made by the more able pupils is limited.

45. The subject is well led and managed. The English co-ordinator is knowledgeable and has produced a realistic and well-paced action plan to rectify under-achievement in writing. This has had a positive impact on standards. She has recently begun to evaluate progress by looking at the quality of work produced by the pupils. However, her monitoring role is new and is a key area for development.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

46. The pupils' competence in the use of language across the curriculum is underdeveloped. Although the teachers try hard to encourage the pupils to discuss and ask questions, there are not enough planned opportunities to develop pupils' writing across the curriculum. In design technology, geography and history, for example, there are too few examples of writing for particular purposes and the pupils are not asked to apply the skills they learn in literacy lessons. Written work in these subjects is limited and, where it does exist, there are often weaknesses in the presentation and organisation of the work and in the pupils' handwriting and spelling.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching and learning are good in Years 1 and 2 and the pupils achieve well
- Standards are rising in Years 3 to 6 but, they could still be higher and more could be expected of the more able pupils in some lessons
- The pupils are confident and competent in number because these skills are taught well across the school
- More could be done to involve the pupils in assessing their progress
- There are too few opportunities for the pupils to use mathematics in other subjects

Commentary

47. By the end of Years 2, standards are above average and the pupils achieve well. This reflects the school's results in the national assessments for seven year olds, which have been rising steadily, and is an improvement on the findings of the last inspection. Standards are also rising in Years 3 to 6, although the results for eleven year olds in recent years have been mixed. The results for 2003 were well below the national average due, in no small part, to a high turnover of staff for this year group. The subject co-ordinator and headteacher, supported by the staff, are committed to raising standards and have responded well to the intensive support provided by the local education authority. Inspection evidence shows that the pupils are now making brisk progress and, by the end of Year 6, standards are in line with those expected of pupils of this age. Given the good start made by the pupils in Years 1 and 2, standards could still be higher.
48. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. The staff have worked hard to raise the profile of mathematics and to improve the quality of teaching. Much of this work has focused on making sure that the planning is clear about what the pupils are expected to learn. In the best lessons, these objectives are clearly displayed and discussed with the pupils and are referred to by the teachers during and at the end of lessons. The teaching of number is good across the school. The teachers have a good understanding of the National Numeracy Strategy. The introductory activities are usually brisk, involving all of the pupils, and there is a strong emphasis on developing the pupils' mental skills. The teaching for pupils in Years 1 and 2 is consistently good. The work is planned to meet the pupils' differing needs. Questioning is good and ongoing assessments are used well to keep a check on how well the pupils are progressing, to identify

those capable of doing harder work and to ensure that those needing extra help get it. Accordingly, the pupils of differing ability achieve well: the pupils with special educational needs are able to play a full part in lessons and the more able pupils are challenged to reach the levels they are capable of attaining. Occasionally, in Years 3 to 6, too little account is taken of the pupils' differing abilities. For example, in a lesson in a Year 3 and 4 class, work was planned for different ability groups, but at too low a level to test the more able. The slow pace of the lesson led to many of the pupils underachieving.

49. The co-ordinator for mathematics is new to the role this year. She is providing enthusiastic and knowledgeable leadership, focused on raising standards and has been instrumental in achieving the improvements seen. The co-ordinator has quickly built up a picture of the strengths across the school and what needs to be done to improve the provision. As part of the work to raise standards, a new system of assessing the pupils' attainment is beginning to provide the teachers with the information they need to track the pupils' progress as they move through the school. Targets are set for individual pupils and groups, but there are few examples of the pupils being involved in assessing their own work. The pupils' work is marked conscientiously by the staff and, in the best examples, the pupils are given a clear idea of how well they are doing and how they can improve their work. However, this is not a regular feature in all classes and this has been identified by the school as an area for development.

Mathematics across the curriculum

50. The pupils have some opportunities to consolidate and apply their mathematical skills in other subjects, but the range of subjects where this is possible is limited. In Year 2, for example, the pupils measured the hands, feet, circumference of heads and the height of different pupils. There were good opportunities for the more able pupils to work independently and they developed their understanding of mathematical language relating to size. Similar opportunities occur in other classes, for example when compiling graphs but they are not planned systematically and opportunities are sometimes missed. There are few examples of the pupils using mathematical skills and knowledge in subjects such as geography and history.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching is good in Years 1 and 2 and the pupils achieve well
- There are good opportunities for the pupils to carry out their own tests and investigations
- There are too few structured ways of assessing the pupils' attainment and monitoring their progress
- The role of the co-ordinator is underdeveloped

Commentary

51. Standards are rising across the school. The pupils attain levels that are above the national average by the end of Year 2 and they are average by the end of Year 6. The teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 are good. The staff have high expectations of all levels of ability and they are set challenging tasks. Resources are carefully selected and prepared. The pupils are required to record their work in a variety of ways, particularly in Year 1, which captures their interest and helps them enjoy all aspects of the subject. Consequently the pupils achieve well.
52. In the best lessons in Years 3 to 6, the pupils are posed interesting questions with exciting and unusual resources to choose from. For instance, a Year 5 science group selected bread to test how well it muffled sound! These pupils took painstaking care to ensure that their experiment was fair and accurate and they remained absorbed and enthusiastic throughout. A computerised sound sensor was well used to measure and compare the sound levels. Clear

scientific conclusions were drawn from the investigation and, consequently, the pupils achieved well. In some lessons, however, the pupils spend too much time drawing or completing worksheets, rather than being involved in new scientific learning. Occasionally in Years 3 to 6, too little account is taken of the most able pupils, who are not accurately identified and given challenging material. Across the school, there are good opportunities for the pupils to record their work in charts, graphs and diagrams, and there is much independent writing. The marking provides praise and encouragement, but does too little to let the pupils know how they can improve. Good use is made of the school grounds when studying topics such as mini-beasts and observing plant life.

53. The pupils have positive attitudes to science and they collaborate very well. When the groups work together, all of the pupils are involved and the work is shared fairly. Occasionally, however, the presentation of work is untidy. The staff ensure that those pupils with special educational needs are fully included in the activities and they are supported well by the other pupils.
54. The co-ordinator has a clear understanding of the work to be done to continue to raise standards, although there have been few opportunities to monitor and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses. A thorough scheme of work supports the teachers' planning and the school intends to restructure the teaching groups to improve the continuity from year to year. There are few structured assessment procedures that focus on the capability of individual pupils and so help the teacher to plan work that caters for the different levels of ability. Computers and other technology are used occasionally in lessons, but this is not planned systematically to make full use of these opportunities. Outside visits enrich the science curriculum, such as the residential trip to Grasmere for Year 4 to 6 pupils, and a visiting science theatre group helped to promote interest in the subject throughout the school.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The provision has improved since the last inspection; standards are rising and are now in line with what is expected
- The way that ICT is planned in other subjects is not sufficiently thorough
- There is no clear way of tracking the pupils' progress as they move through the school
- The monitoring of teaching and learning is underdeveloped

Commentary

55. It was only possible to observe two lessons dedicated to ICT. These lessons, together with opportunities to observe the pupils using computers in lessons and discussions with the pupils indicate that standards are rising and are in line with what is expected of pupils at the end of Years 2 and 6. Across the school the pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve appropriately. At the time of the last inspection there were significant weaknesses in the school's provision, including gaps in the planned programme, and the pupils' attainment was below that expected. The school has worked hard to improve this by investing in new resources and improving the teachers' knowledge and confidence.
56. The teaching was satisfactory in the lessons seen. The lessons were well organised and the pupils were clear about what they were expected to learn. This contributes to the pupils' satisfactory progress and achievement. The pupils in Year 1 know how to correct their mistakes when they write using a computer. They use software to improve their sentences. They know how to drag blocks of colour onto their pictures using an art package. These pupils enjoy listening to, and joining in with, songs using the classroom 'listening stations'. In a mathematics lesson, the pupils in Year 2 were observed giving instructions to the 'Pixie' (a programmable floor robot) as part of their work on direction and movement. As the pupils move through Years 3 to 6,

they build on their skills and use more sophisticated software so that, by Year 6, they have experience of digital photography, multimedia presentations, spreadsheets and control technology. The oldest pupils were observed using the internet to research information for a leaflet on the Victorians. These pupils can access websites using a search engine and they are beginning to be more discriminating about those that are most likely to provide the information they need. The pupils are able to reposition or resize the pictures they download. A good feature of the lesson was the way that the more able pupils supported those less confident.

57. Under the competent leadership of the newly appointed subject co-ordinator, the national guidelines for planning are used well to ensure that the pupils develop the necessary knowledge, skills and understanding in each year and that the work becomes progressively more demanding. A central area, often used for ICT lessons, and a set of portable laptop computers are used to deliver lessons and, occasionally, support the learning in other subjects. The co-ordinator has identified the need to establish a system for assessing the pupils' progress and for checking the teaching and learning across the school and there are plans to improve the way that the teaching and learning are monitored.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

58. There are some examples of computers being used in subjects such as English, mathematics, science and art and design, but this is not yet planned systematically. As a result, there are too few opportunities for the pupils to practise and develop their ICT skills in other subjects or use those skills to support their learning in those subjects. The school recognises the need to plan the use of computers more rigorously to ensure that these important opportunities are not missed.

HUMANITIES

59. No **geography** lessons were seen during the inspection, so it is not possible to make overall judgements about provision and standards. There are very few geographical displays around the school and very little work was available for scrutiny. A small amount of work about the local environment in Years 1 and 2 was of a reasonable standard. Although the planning, based on the national guidelines, covers all of the necessary areas, it provides no guidance about mapping skills and there is no indication that this work takes place and there are gaps in physical geography and in the depth of study of contrasting localities. The pupils show little enthusiasm for the subject. Those in Year 6 are unable to recall much of the work they have covered, beyond the water cycle. The new subject co-ordinator has, as yet, not had the opportunity to begin any sort of audit of the subject.
60. It was only possible to see one lesson in **history** (in a Year 3 and 4 class) and there is very limited recorded evidence of pupils' work over the year. It is not, therefore, possible to make a secure judgement on the provision and standards in this subject. There is no formal assessment in this subject and this makes it difficult for teachers to plan the next stage of learning. Despite there being little recorded evidence of work covered, the pupils in Year 6 can recall their work on Victorian transport and the pupils in Years 3 and 4 can describe how the river Nile influenced the quality of life in Ancient Egypt. In the history lesson observed, the teaching was satisfactory. The pupils' were able to place historical events on a timeline and could recognise the distinctive features of Viking and Saxon people as they sorted pictorial evidence. Learning in history is enriched by a range of visits and visitors to the school.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

61. It was only possible to observe one lesson each in art and design and music and no lessons were seen in design and technology, so overall judgements about provision and standards are not possible. The teaching in the Year 1 **art and design** lesson was very good. The pupils created clay models of ocean creatures, chose their own tools and manipulated them well to add texture and detail to the models. They talked sensitively about what they liked about their own work and that of other pupils. The teacher suggested how the models might be improved, but allowed the pupils to make final decisions for themselves. The finished models were of a good quality and above the standard normal expected for pupils of this age. The school has recently been awarded 'Artsmark Silver' by the Arts Council and there is evidence, from the work on display, that pupils in all year groups show creativity and an enjoyment of the subject. Parents run a popular after-school art club, where the pupils experience a wide variety of media and complete work to a good standard. Displays, including pastel sketches on the life and techniques of Leonardo da Vinci in Year 6, and the school's collection of previously completed work, indicate that the pupils leave the school with a wide variety of skills.
62. In **design and technology**, the pupils' previous work shows that those in Year 1 make a fruit salad as part of a broader topic on fruit and vegetables and they draw and write about their favourite playground equipment. In Year 2, the pupils produce labelled drawings of wheeled vehicles, while those in Year 3 and 4 create pottery Egyptian mummies as part of their work in history. Older pupils have produced pop-up cards and have designed and made footwear, some of it of a high standard. The school's intention is to link design and technology to other subjects. However, there is little evidence of the pupils being taught the design process systematically, building on what they learn from year-to-year and there are few examples of the pupils reviewing and evaluating their work.
63. In **music**, further evidence was gained from discussion with pupils and staff, a scrutiny of the planning and resources and the impact of music in the wider school, such as assemblies. There are many opportunities for pupils to use instruments during lessons, including those from other cultures, although there are few tuned percussion instruments, which limits the level of performance. A published scheme of work helps the non-specialist teachers. Extra lessons on the keyboard are offered to the pupils and they have the opportunity to learn the recorder and guitar. The pupils enjoy singing and sing enthusiastically in assemblies. The co-ordinator has no opportunity to develop the subject throughout the school, although the school has identified musical appreciation as an area for development.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils enjoy PE lessons and work hard
- They are given a broad range of opportunities in and out of lessons

Commentary

64. The school plans a broad and interesting physical education programme that covers the requirements of the National Curriculum and ensures that the pupils develop their skills progressively as they move through the school. The pupils attain standards that are in line with what is expected of pupils of this age and they achieve appropriately, although there are many examples across the school of pupils performing at a high level.
65. Four lessons were seen during the inspection. The teaching was satisfactory overall and good teaching was seen in Year 1 and in Years 4 and 5. Thorough warm-ups are a feature of all lessons and the pupils have a good understanding of why they have to do so. The pupils in Year

1 were observed learning to control a large ball; the correct techniques were explained carefully by the teacher and there was a logical progression from simpler skills to more demanding activities. The pupils achieved well and a brisk pace was maintained throughout. Throwing and catching were developed further in Year 2 and most of the pupils were able to throw a range of equipment, including balls, quoits and beanbags, with increasing accuracy.

66. In a gymnastics lesson with the Year 4 and 5 class, the teaching was good and it was focused on improving the pupils' skills. Some of the more able pupils performed to a high standard, showing a real contrast in body shapes and linking movements together smoothly. All of the pupils, including those with special educational needs, were actively engaged and they worked hard to improve their performance. The pupils in Years 5 and 6 were observed practising a range of athletics skills, measuring their efforts and working to improve on their personal best. Support was provided by a student from the local secondary school. Those pupils in the groups supported by the teacher or student made good progress. However, those working without direct supervision found it difficult to focus on the task and they made slower progress. Overall, though, the pupils enjoy PE lessons and they behave very well.
67. The school provides a wide range of opportunities outside of lessons. Some are regular opportunities organised by the school's staff, while others are more seasonal and are led by staff from the local secondary school or by coaches from outside clubs and organisations. This works well; the activities are well supported by the pupils and they provide good opportunities for them to extend their skills and try out a wider range of sports than might otherwise be possible.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

68. It was not possible to see any lessons dedicated to personal, social and health education, so an overall judgement is not possible. However, from discussions with the pupils, teachers and parents it appears that the schools' programme in this area is having a very positive impact on pupils' personal development. Citizenship is closely linked to the school's religious education programme and to its Catholic ethos. The school places high priority on children valuing themselves, nurturing confidence and encouraging an awareness of the need to act responsibly.
69. The provision meets statutory requirements for education about drugs, sex and relationships and the Year 6 pupils take part in a local drug awareness project. The science curriculum includes raising awareness of healthy living, the dangers of smoking and the need for exercise. A range of extra curricular sporting activities, accessed by a good percentage of pupils, extends the awareness of, and participation in, healthy exercise. There is a brief policy for Citizenship which includes work within the wider community as part of encouraging pupils to value God's world and their place in it. It enables staff to nurture the pupils' moral attitude as well as to respond to their personal and emotional needs. The pupils and all adults, including parents, value all members of the community. Residential visits help the pupils to understand how different rules apply when they live as well as work together. Paired, or small group discussions, often as part of circle time, are a good strategy used by teachers to encourage pupils to listen to the views of others. The pupils take pride in their school and take an active part in decision making at the school and the school council is effective and highly representative.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

| <i>Inspection judgement</i> | <i>Grade</i> |
|--|--------------|
| The overall effectiveness of the school | 4 |
| How inclusive the school is | 3 |
| How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection | 4 |
| Value for money provided by the school | 4 |
| Overall standards achieved | 4 |
| Pupils' achievement | 4 |
| 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 | 4 |
| The quality of teaching | 4 |
| How well pupils learn | 4 |
| The quality of assessment | 4 |
| 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 | 3 |
| Support, advice and guidance for pupils | 4 |
| How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views | 3 |
| The effectiveness of the school's links with parents | 3 |
| The quality of the school's links with the community | 3 |
| The school's links with other schools and colleges | 3 |
| The leadership and management of the school | 4 |
| The governance of the school | 4 |
| The leadership of the headteacher | 4 |
| 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).