

# INSPECTION REPORT

**ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY  
SCHOOL**

Bingley

LEA area: Bradford

Unique reference number: 107342

Headteacher: Mrs M McAndrew

Lead inspector: Mr P Edwards

Dates of inspection: 5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> July 2004

Inspection number: 257741

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:	5 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	153
School address:	Crownest Road Bingley West Yorkshire
Postcode:	BD16 4HQ
Telephone number:	01274 564883
Fax number:	01274 564883
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs C Vincent
Date of previous inspection:	15 <sup>th</sup> June 1998

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School is smaller than other primary schools, with 153 pupils on roll, 83 boys and 70 girls. Almost all pupils are from white, United Kingdom ethnic backgrounds. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals, at 6.5 per cent, is below the national average. The percentage of the pupils having been identified as having special educational needs (19.5 per cent) and the percentage having a Statement of Special Educational Need (1.9 per cent) are similar to the national average. Pupil mobility is low, with three pupils joining and one pupil leaving the school at times other than the normal admission and leaving times. The school was designated a Beacon School in 2001 and gained the Healthy School award in 2003. Attainment on entry to the school is above average.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21069	Mr P Edwards	Lead inspector	Foundation Stage curriculum, science, information and communication technology, physical education.
9224	Mr M Vineall	Lay inspector	
10228	Ms S Russam	Team inspector	English, art and design, design and technology, music, special educational needs.
22556	Mr E Morgan	Team inspector	Mathematics, geography, history, personal, social and health education and citizenship.

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

St Joseph's is a **very effective** school. There is a strong, caring Catholic ethos where pupils behave very well and are encouraged to do their best. The staff are enthusiastic, very well led and managed by the headteacher and supported well by the governing body. Most pupils make at least good progress throughout their time at the school because of the very good teaching. The school provides very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The pupils achieve very well in English, mathematics and science.
- Teaching is very good overall.
- Assessment procedures are very effective.
- Relationships between pupils and between staff and pupils are very good.
- The pupils' behaviour and attitudes towards work are very good, as is the provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The school is very well led and managed.
- The pupils could achieve better in their history and geography work.
- The pupils could present their work better.

The school has made good progress since the previous inspection. The high standards in English, mathematics and science have been maintained and an improvement in the quality of information and communication technology resources has resulted in the pupils attaining better standards. There has been a continued development of assessment procedures, which are used very effectively to monitor standards and the progress of individual pupils. The school has recognised the need to devote more time to the teaching of history and geography to raise standards in these subjects.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

#### Year 6 results

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	All schools			Similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	A	A	A*	A*
Mathematics	B	A	A	A
Science	A	A	A	A

Key: A\* - very high; 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.

Pupils' achievement is **very good** overall. Pupils' achievement in reception and in Years 3 to 6 is very good and it is good in Years 1 and 2. Year 6 pupils attain standards that are well above average in English, mathematics and science. Standards in ICT are above the expected levels. Year 2 pupils attain above average standards in reading, writing, mathematics, science and ICT. Children enter the school with levels of attainment that are slightly above average. They make very good progress in the reception class and most are

likely to achieve above the nationally expected levels in all areas of learning by the time they enter Year 1. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make good progress and in Years 3 to 6 they make very good progress. Throughout the school, work is very well matched to the pupils' ability, enabling them to achieve the standards of which they are capable. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress towards their individual targets because of the good teaching and good support provided by teaching assistants. Pupils do not achieve the standards they should in geography and history because too little time is devoted to these subjects.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are **very good** and help to promote their very good attitudes and behaviour. Attendance is very good.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The quality of education provided by the school is **very good**. Teaching is **very good** overall. The children learn very well in the Foundation Stage because the teacher makes learning fun and interesting. In Years 1 and 2, the teaching is good and work is well matched to the pupils' needs. In Years 3 to 6, the teaching is challenging and exciting and the pupils make very good gains in their learning. The curriculum is good and enriched by a good range of extracurricular activities. The school acknowledges it does not devote sufficient time to history and geography. Occasionally, there is an overuse of mundane worksheets which result in pupils not presenting their work as neatly as they should. The school provides very good personal care, guidance and support for the pupils, which is underpinned by its caring, Catholic ethos. Very good links with parents and the community make a significant contribution to the pupils' learning.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are **very good** overall. The headteacher works very effectively with her deputy to provide very good leadership for the school. She has managed a high level of staff change very successfully, to develop a supportive and committed team. Subject co-ordinators, many of whom are new to their role, demonstrate a detailed knowledge of their subject and lead them very effectively. Governance is good. Governors are fully involved in working with the headteacher and staff to determine the effectiveness of the school and to identify what needs to be done to improve. They fully meet their statutory requirements and make a good contribution to the life of the school.

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

The overwhelming majority of parents are very supportive of the school. They feel that the school provides their children with a good quality of education and that there is a good range of extracurricular activities. Some indicated that they would like more opportunities for their children to learn to play the recorder as a precursor to learning a musical instrument.

The pupils have very positive views of the school. The questionnaires and discussions with pupils indicate that they enjoy school and that they have to work hard. Most feel that the behaviour of other pupils is good and that the teachers are approachable and helpful.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Raise standards in history and geography and provide the pupils with more time and opportunities to carry out work in these subjects.
- Improve the quality of the presentation of pupils' work.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

Year 6 pupils attain standards that are **well above average** and they achieve **very well** overall. They attain well above average levels in English and mathematics, and above average standards in information and communication technology. Their attainment in science is well above average. Year 2 pupils attain standards that are above average overall. Children achieve very well in the Foundation Stage and in Years 3 to 6. Achievement in Years 1 and 2 is good.

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

- In the National Curriculum tests, the pupils regularly attain standards that are well above the national average in English, mathematics and science.
- Children in the reception class make very good progress.
- Standards in ICT have improved and pupils attain standards that are above average.
- Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and make very good progress overall.
- Pupils do not attain the standards of which they are capable in history and geography.

#### **Commentary**

1. The results of the national tests for pupils in Year 6 over the last four years show that standards are well above average. Occasionally, they have been very high in English and science. Inspection evidence confirms what has been seen in the tests and shows that Year 6 pupils attain standards that are well above average in English, mathematics and science and that they achieve very well. The provisional test results for 2004 indicate that standards have been maintained. The trend in the school's average National Curriculum points score for all core subjects has been better than that seen nationally at Key Stage 1 and similar to the national average at Key Stage 2. The school sets very high targets for itself in the tests and, whilst not always achieving them, it does very well to come close. The proportion of pupils attaining above the nationally expected Level 4 in all subjects is much higher than is seen nationally. This is because the teachers have high expectations of what they can achieve. The school makes very effective use of additional staff to enable pupils to be grouped according to their prior attainment. This ensures that all pupils are given work that challenges them and they attain the standards of which they are capable. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls.
2. The children's attainment on entry to the reception class varies considerably from year to year, but it is generally slightly above average. The children settle quickly and happily and achieve very well due to the high quality teaching and very effective support provided by an enthusiastic team of adults. Most children are likely to achieve the nationally expected goals in all areas of learning by the time they enter Year 1. The achievement of pupils in Years 1 and 2 is good. Frequently, standards in national tests are well above average and inspection evidence shows that standards are above average in all areas. There is an above average number of pupils with special educational needs and these pupils also achieve well because of the school's effective provision. Standards in science are also above average by the end of Year 2.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	18.1 (17.7)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	17.0 (15.8)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	17.9 (19.2)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 17 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	31.1 (29.5)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	29.7 (29.5)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	31.1 (31.0)	28.6 (28.3)

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

- Standards in ICT are above average at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6. They have improved since the time of the previous inspection, partly because of the much improved resources but also because of the increased confidence of teachers. The regular teaching of skills and providing the pupils with opportunities to practise these skills to promote learning in other subjects ensure most pupils achieve well.
- The school has recognised that it needs to devote more time to the teaching of history and geography. Whilst these subjects are taught well and the pupils make good progress within lessons, they do not achieve what they are capable of because there are too few opportunities to build on the skills they have learned.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve as well as their classmates and make very good progress towards the steps noted on their individual education plans. This is because teachers ensure these pupils receive good additional help in lessons. Also, the school has very good procedures in place to identify any problems pupils are having with their learning and, as a result, any difficulties are quickly remedied. Teachers and support staff work very well together to ensure that the pupils know what they are expected to do and they fully involve them in the activities.

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

Pupils' attendance is **very good**. Their attitudes to school and to work and their behaviour in school are also **very good**. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is another **very good** area of strength.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Attendance is well ahead of national norms and rising still, but some pupils could arrive more punctually.
- The very good relationships between all in the school benefit all aspects of the pupils' education.

- Attitudes to school and to work are remarkably mature.
- Behaviour is consistently very good with few exceptions.
- Very good personal development underpins the pupils' learning and maturing with excellent input on moral development.

### **Commentary**

6. Beneath many of the very good aspects of this school lie some particularly good relationships – between pupils and all adults in the school, between the pupils themselves and also between all staff. Pupils are confident and mature and readily engage in often amusing conversation with adults, yet rarely abuse such relationships. The result is a delightfully 'adult' relationship between teachers and pupils in class, where humour and fun abound. Thus, a teacher, in an outdoor physical education lesson, ran round with the pupils in the warm-up and accepted a challenge to take part in the final test of who could throw the javelin furthest (and lost!). Teachers are able to interact with the pupils at their own level, knowing such trust is not taken advantage of. Much fun is evident in this school.
7. Hand in hand with these relationships go very good attitudes to school and to work. Pupils co-operate, work well in groups or pairs and, especially, care for each other and celebrate each other's successes. Behaviour is also very good with a very positive, consistent and clear policy and a reward system that has evolved from the children themselves and creates great pride in individual, class and 'house' performance. Self-discipline and responsibility are regularly witnessed, as in a lesson when the teacher had to go out briefly and the child 'put in charge' carried on the activity the teacher had been engaged in.
8. On entry to the school, the children are encouraged to become independent and this enables them to achieve the expected goals by the time they enter Year 1. Children are given increasing responsibility as they progress through the school, and this contributes very well to their maturity and personal development. By the time they reach Year 6, the pupils' confidence has developed well. For example, assembly monitors need minimal supervision and use their initiative very well. Pupils take their responsibilities of living in a community very seriously and often raise money for charities and good causes. Underpinning such attitudes and behaviour are many very good inputs to personal development. The work on moral development is excellent. Pupils are well aware of what is right and wrong, not only in their own immediate world but also on a wider plane. A first class display on the meaning of disability was evident and the school was very involved in celebrating human difference across several parts of the curriculum. Spiritual awareness is very good – not just in the instances of thoughtful assemblies and regular prayer, but in other areas too. A very special 'reflective area' in the hall is available and used. Teaching does generate true wonder at times – as when a class saw images of a geyser on the Internet. The very good social development could be assumed from the attitudes and behaviour seen from pupils and was very evident in displays, in personal, social and health education inputs, as well as in everyday teaching. Cultural development is good, with good insights into the Arts and the school has worked effectively to counter the criticism made at the last inspection of insufficient contact with other faiths.

### **Attendance**

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

Authorised absence	Unauthorised absence
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School data	4.1
National data	5.4

School data	0.1
National data	0.4

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

## 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	149	1	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	2	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	2	0	0

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

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is **very good**. Teaching is **very good**. The school provides a **good** curriculum that is enriched by a **good** range of out of school activities. The school provides **very good** care, guidance and support for its pupils. Links with parents, the local community and other schools are **very good**.

### Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **very good**. In Years 1 and 2, teaching is good and it is very good in Years 3 to 6 and in the reception class. Assessment is very good.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good teaching in the Foundation Stage provides the children with a very good start to their education.
- Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is frequently very good because work is challenging and enables the pupils to make significant progress.
- The pupils' work is assessed very effectively overall and the information used well to plan future work. It is excellent in the Foundation Stage.
- Pupils with special educational needs are provided with very good support and the teachers match the work very effectively to their needs.
- There is an overuse of worksheets.

### Commentary

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 34 lessons*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	13 (38%)	19 (56%)	2 (6%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

9. There has been a good improvement in the quality of teaching since the previous inspection. There have been a significant number of changes to the teaching staff during the past two years and those new to the school have added to the strengths already present.
10. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is consistently very good. Although only newly qualified, the teacher has had significant experience of working with young children and this is evident in all aspects of the provision. Very effective teamwork, with high quality planning, ensures that all children are provided with work that not only matches their ability but also their level of maturity. Lessons move along at a brisk pace and pupils quickly develop confidence because of the teacher's ability to involve all pupils during question and answer sessions. There is a very good balance between teacher-directed and child-chosen activities and this helps considerably to develop the children's independence. Teaching assistants make a very significant contribution to the children's learning, providing them with good support and intervening when appropriate.
11. The quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6 was very good in a significant number of lessons during the inspection and an analysis of the pupils' books shows that this quality of teaching is the norm. The high quality of teaching enables pupils of all abilities to achieve very well and to attain standards that are well above average in the core subjects. Teachers have high expectations of what the pupils are capable of doing and the pupils almost always live up to these expectations. Throughout the school, but particularly in the juniors, the teachers are very good at using searching questioning to determine what the pupils know and can do and then using the pupils' responses to determine the next stage of learning. In all classes, the work is very well matched to the pupils' level of ability and this ensures that all make at least good progress. Discussions with the pupils show that they enjoy learning and this is because the teachers make learning exciting and fun.
12. Teachers in Years 3 to 6 use their specialist knowledge very well to support the pupils' achievement. For example, a teacher with very good skills in coaching games demonstrated these skills when teaching upper juniors invasion and defence techniques during a tag rugby lesson. The pupils achieved particularly well and showed skills that were above what might be expected for their age. Teachers also share their subject expertise very well. For example, the pupils' ICT skills have improved very well because those teachers with strong skills in the subject provide help and guidance for the colleagues.
13. The assessment of children's work in the Foundation Stage is excellent. Very detailed records of the assessment are kept and the information is used very effectively to plan the next stage of learning. All of the reception staff are involved in recording progress and regular meetings with parents ensure they are kept informed and able to participate in their children's education. The assessments in the Foundation Stage are used very well to ensure a smooth transition to the National Curriculum. This is particularly evident with the gradual introduction of literacy and numeracy lessons for the younger children. The effective assessment of pupils' work continues into the infants and juniors, and the use of the data has a considerable impact on how the school is organised and on the teachers' planning. The consistent use of the assessment

information enables the teachers to match the work closely to the pupils' needs and results in at least good progress being made by the pupils.

14. Pupils with special educational needs receive very good additional help in lessons from skilled and competent learning support assistants. When it is necessary for some individuals to receive more intensive help, they are withdrawn from class sensitively to work in a quieter environment. This combination of approaches ensures they make at least good progress, and frequently progress is very good. Individual education plan targets are clear and concise. Teachers and learning support assistants use the individual education plans well to inform their planning and this ensures work is effectively matched to pupils' individual needs.
15. Occasionally, there is an overuse of mundane worksheets in some classes, particularly in the infant classes. These worksheets frequently do nothing that the teachers cannot do better by other methods. The use of these worksheets also results in pupils not always presenting work neatly and tidily.

### **The curriculum**

The curriculum is **good**. Opportunities for curricular enrichment are **good**. Accommodation and resources are **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The Foundation Stage curriculum is very good.
- The core curriculum and the use made of information and communication technology is very good.
- Insufficient opportunities are provided for pupils to achieve their full potential in history and geography.
- Very good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs.
- Good provision is made for pupils' personal, social and health education, and to develop pupils' understanding of citizenship.
- Pupils are very well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- There is a good range of activities provided outside the formal curriculum that further enhance pupils' learning.

### **Commentary**

16. The curriculum fulfils all statutory requirements and provides pupils with equality of access and opportunity. Good arrangements are in place for reviewing policies and schemes of work and this has ensured very good provision in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology. The school recognises that more needs to be done to ensure equality of standards across the foundation subjects, notably history and geography.
17. Children in the reception class are provided with a rich curriculum that provides them with a very good start to their education. All areas of the Early Years curriculum are taught in sufficient depth with good emphasis on the development of the children's reading, writing and numeracy skills.
18. The needs of the children are very well met through the high quality planning and assessment that enable all staff to provide a good level of support for the different abilities present in the class.

19. The curricular provision is very good in English, mathematics, science and ICT and the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are well embedded in the school's schemes of work. Very good use is being made of computers, both by teachers to enliven their teaching and by pupils to support their learning, in virtually all areas of the curriculum. Overall, pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are used well across the curriculum.
20. Throughout the school, the curriculum has been very well adapted to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs. Individual education plans are of a very high standard, they are regularly reviewed and amended and staff make good reference to meeting specific targets in their planning. Teachers and support staff work well together to ensure learning opportunities are consistently challenging and stimulating. Very good account is taken of advice from other professionals when considering how best to address individual pupils' needs. As a consequence, any potential barriers to learning are eliminated. The school also makes very good provision for pupils identified as gifted and talented.
21. The school makes good provision for pupils' personal, social, health education and citizenship and is at present working to produce an integrated programme incorporating the "Here I am" scheme of work. Discussion in class enables pupils to talk about their views, feelings and opinions and to converse about moral and social issues. Relationships are very good in the school and this makes a significant contribution to pupils' personal development. A strong community spirit is evident in the school and pupils are well aware of the concept of citizenship and what it means to live in a community.
22. The school provides well for the enrichment of pupils' learning through well-planned visits, including residential experiences for older pupils. After-school activities for pupils in Year 3-6, such as in music and dance, also enhance pupils' learning, particularly, but not exclusively, for talented pupils. Very good arrangements are in place to prepare pupils for entry into secondary education and this includes both academic and personal provision.
23. Accommodation is good and the learning environment is enhanced by displays of pupils' work, particularly their artwork. The school is well maintained and the provision made for reception children is particularly noteworthy. There is an adequate hard surfaced play area, but the use that can be made of the adjacent field is limited due to the slope. Overall, the school is well resourced with the recently established computer suite being well used to support pupils' learning.

### Care, guidance and support

This school works very hard to promote a strong, caring Catholic ethos. The provision for the pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is **very good**. Support and advice provided is **very good** and the children's involvement in the work and development of the school is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school works very hard to ensure a safe, secure and healthy school, especially in the Foundation Stage.
- Very good relationships throughout the school underpin all the good work on care.
- Support and advice is well founded on the very good knowledge and understanding

- of all pupils.
- Induction into the Foundation Stage and onward to the various secondary schools is very good.
- The pupils are provided with very good opportunities to be involved with the running of the school through the school council.

### **Commentary**

24. Security, safety and health are high priorities in this school with very good procedures evident on issues such as child protection and health and safety. Most of these areas are led by the headteacher, but with all staff well involved, knowledgeable and aware of their roles. With several recent and imminent staff changes, the school plans further training next term. Where appropriate, good records are kept of drills and inspections. The handling of care issues in the Foundation Stage is excellent because of the clear understanding of the children's needs shown by the staff.
25. As with attitudes and behaviour, the very good care and support draws beneficially upon the very good relationships so evident in this school. Close knowledge and understanding of each child enables advice and guidance to be appropriately and sensitively applied. Moreover, the role model provided by staff is another key force in developing the children to maturity.
26. Such care is evident from parents' first contacts with the school. Very good arrangements are made for entry into the reception class for both parents and children. Equally good work is seen for easing the passage of all pupils to the five or six secondary schools to which pupils transfer. A special feature of this is to identify any pupil felt to need special support for such a move. This even extends to extra visits to the new school, accompanied bus journeys and briefings on how to deal with specific problems.
27. Pupils are involved very fully in the development and life of their school. A school council is working well and making a good contribution to the way the school is run. The council is consulted regularly, raises many issues and acts as a truly democratic voice for pupils. Its contributions have been significant on behaviour policy, on the development and management of play areas and on such innovations as a 'Walking Bus'. The council also generates much responsibility in its members. A suggestion box is also available, pupils are frequently consulted and several pupils readily accept and enjoy responsibilities around the school.

### **Partnership with parents, other schools and the community**

**Very good** links have been established with parents. **Very good** links have been forged with other local schools and colleges and with the local community.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- A very good and developing partnership with parents has been created that engages them effectively and brings many benefits into school.
- The school has built good links with the community that go beyond the very good relationship with the Church and its congregation.
- Very good links with other schools and colleges bring a wide range of benefits.

### **Commentary**

28. Parents express predominantly favourable views of the school – unanimously favourable in the case of areas like teaching, getting the best out of pupils, and the fact that their child likes school. The school works well to engage parents with the work of the school and derives many benefits from the interest created. Parents are consulted about and involved in school development and encouraged well to be involved in their children’s education. The informal meetings with the parents at each end of the day are impressive and much work and imagination goes into keeping parents close to what is going on. In return, parents help in school and on visits and support their children’s work. The Parent Teacher Association is particularly active, not only socially, but also with impressive fund-raising for equipment and visits. Some parents feel that communications could be better between school and parents, but the school has worked well this past year to improve these with more information on curricular activity, modified parent evenings, an improved website and a new notice board. Even more might be done by making the newsletter more frequent and by individual class teachers providing insights into work to be tackled. Overall, though, a very good partnership is enjoyed.
  
29. The school enjoys very good and close links with its Mother Church and its congregation, but good links go beyond this to the whole local community. Sporting links have been created through local tournaments and with Bradford City and Bradford Bulls. Arts links are kept alive by involvement in local festivals. Several charities are supported, both local and global. Local resources are also used well to enhance the curriculum through visits to places like the fire station, hospitals and the library, and by visitors coming in, such as parents with special skills and local food organisations. The school takes a healthily outward-looking stance.
  
30. Very good links also exist with local schools and colleges. Links with several schools offer mutual benefits. As a Beacon School, St Joseph’s has not only enjoyed close relationships with several other primaries, but also has established helpful links to a range of secondary schools that bring support in ICT, the Arts, modern foreign languages and science. Work experience in the school is provided, and benefits the school as an additional resource, for trainee teachers, nursery nurse students and secondary school pupils.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership and management of the school are **very good** overall. The headteacher provides very good leadership and she is very well supported by key members of staff. Governance is good and statutory duties are fulfilled effectively.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher works in an effective partnership with her deputy to provide a very clear direction for the work of the school.
- Subject leaders provide good guidance in their subjects.
- The Foundation Stage is very well led and managed.
- A strong team approach has established a very supportive and caring ethos.
- The management of special educational needs is very good.

### **Commentary**

31. The headteacher and deputy, both new to their posts since the previous inspection, have established an influential and effective partnership. This is enabling the strong and

consistent leadership to continue. Self-evaluation procedures have developed well and the headteacher has a very clear understanding of where the strengths and weaknesses lie and, importantly, takes effective action to make improvements. Procedures for tracking pupils' attainment and for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning are now an integral part of day-to-day management and have resulted in continued improvements to the quality of teaching and learning.

32. There have been a considerable number of staff changes and the headteacher has taken the opportunity to reorganise subject responsibilities. There has been a clear focus on continuing to raise standards in the core subjects, but the school has not neglected other subjects, and standards in music and physical education continue to improve. However, the school has recognised the need to raise standards in history and geography in line with the core subjects. The school is already looking at the timetabling arrangements to determine how it can provide more time for these subjects. Subject leaders, particularly in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology, lead their subjects very well. They have a very good understanding of the quality of teaching and are very aware of the standards in their subjects. Their development of assessment procedures is providing all staff with a clear picture of how well pupils of all abilities are performing.
33. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator is a very experienced practitioner and she uses her skills very effectively to assess the needs of the children, provide work that is well matched to their needs and ensure that they make significant progress during their time in the reception class.
34. The leadership and management of special educational needs are very good. This aspect is very competently co-ordinated by a knowledgeable and efficient co-ordinator. She provides good support and advice for colleagues, maintains pupils' records to a high standard and ensures that the school makes very good provision for meeting the needs of every pupil on the special educational needs register, or those who potentially need extra help.
35. The school's mission statement is known and shared by staff and pupils and this is reflected in all aspects of the school's work. The headteacher has very successfully managed a period of staff change and established a strong team approach where the views of all are valued. There are clear procedures for new staff, enabling them to quickly understand what the school is trying to achieve, how it is organised and what is expected of staff and pupils. The support enables all staff to work together very effectively to promote the school's Catholic ethos and to create a very caring and friendly community. The parents highly value this aspect of the school's work and feel that their children are very well looked after.
36. Governors are supportive of the school and fulfil their statutory duties fully. They have a good knowledge and understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and work very successfully with the headteacher to identify areas for improvement. There is a detailed school improvement plan that is carefully costed and has clear targets for improvement which are based on continuing to raise the standards of pupils' attainment. The governors are kept well informed about standards by the headteacher. There is a detailed analysis of National Curriculum test data and the governors use this information to identify the impact of staffing changes. The chair and a number of other governors are regular visitors to the school and they have a good understanding of what is taking place.

## **Financial information**

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	483 174
Total expenditure	459 598
Expenditure per pupil	3 004

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	71 692
Balance carried forward to the next	95 268

37. The governors have established very good financial procedures and manage the school's funds efficiently. They receive good support from the school's finance officer and this enables them to receive up-to-date financial information and to compare spending levels and levels of attainment with those of similar schools. This information is used well by the governors to apply the principles of best value to evaluate the school's effectiveness. The school has accrued a significant underspend. However, most of this is committed to improvements to the building and improving the information and communication technology resources further. The school has also built up a budget surplus to protect staffing due to the reduced admission number that has been implemented by the diocese.

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

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

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

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

- The quality of teaching is very good overall.
- The children achieve very well in all areas.
- The children's personal and social development is very good.
- The accommodation is used very effectively.
- The teacher and support staff work together very effectively.
- The children's progress is monitored regularly and assessments are used very effectively to ensure that their educational and personal needs are met.

#### **Commentary**

38. Progress since the previous inspection has been good. The Foundation Stage curriculum has been fully implemented for those pupils in the reception class. At the time of the inspection, 20 reception children were taught in a mixed-age class with Year 1 pupils. The teacher in this class has been appointed to the school recently and has quickly and effectively established positive relationships with colleagues, creating a very stimulating working environment for the children. Relationships between pupils and adults are very good. During the inspection, volunteer helpers and teaching assistants supported the children's learning well.
39. The children's attainment on entry to the school is generally above average, but varies considerably from year to year. The attainment of the children in the current reception group covers the full ability range. Teachers cater very well for the children who have special educational needs. They are taught well, make good progress and are given very good support by teaching assistants. By the start of Year 1, almost all of the children are likely to have achieved or exceeded all of the goals that children are expected to reach by the end of reception.
40. The accommodation is used very well to ensure that there are times when the class is taught as one and times when the reception children are taught as a separate group. Teaching is consistently very good and the children make very good progress. The teachers and the nursery nurse plan an imaginative range of learning opportunities and together they ensure that there is a good balance between teacher-led and child-initiated activities. Regular assessments are made of the children's progress, which in turn are used to plan the next stage of learning for the children. Under the guidance of another member of staff, the newly qualified teacher leads the Foundation Stage very effectively. Her considerable experience of working with young children provides her with a very significant understanding of how the children learn.
41. Excellent assessment procedures have been established, and the teacher and her colleagues plan work very effectively to build on the children's prior understanding. Relationships between school and parents are very good and profiles on how well their children are progressing are shared with them on a termly basis. In addition, regular coffee mornings provide the parents with opportunities to see their children working in class.

42. The children are happy, confident and very well motivated learners and there is very good provision for their **personal, social and emotional development**. The children work well alongside the Year 1 pupils – they listen carefully, understand the importance of taking turns and follow instructions well. Their behaviour is very good. The teacher has high expectations of the children’s social skills and, as a result, the children cooperate well with one another and persevere with their work. When getting changed for physical education activities, the children do so with little fuss and almost all can dress themselves with little adult help. The children enjoy making choices and are eager to learn new skills. Relationships are very good. The children respond well to the range of opportunities that they are provided with to engage in conversation with each other and with adults. The vast majority of the children are likely to exceed the early learning goals for personal development by the time they enter Year 1.
43. The children achieve very well in **communication, language and literacy** and the teaching is very good. Speaking and listening skills are developed well through discussion and teachers use appropriately targeted questions that encourage the children to extend their responses. Every opportunity is used to talk to the children when they are engaged in their work. For example, in the ‘Travel Agency’, adults enter into role-play situations as they ask the travel agent for information about holidays on offer. Books and stories have a high priority in the class and the children talk readily about their favourite characters in stories. They make good use of the ‘Listening Corner’ during free choice time and enjoy listening to stories and following the pictures and texts in books. The children’s reading skills are good and reading progress is monitored regularly. The children know most initial letter sounds – they write lists and labels and have numerous opportunities for writing in ‘play’ situations and in those situations which are led by the teacher, when they link similar sounds with their writing. Letter sounds are taught systematically and most of the children write simple sentences well. Most children will meet or exceed the early learning goals for communication, language and literacy by the end of the reception year.
44. Imaginative contexts and well-planned teaching are used to ensure that the children achieve well in their **mathematical development**. Appropriate use is made of number rhymes such as ‘one, two, three, four, five, once I caught a fish alive’. To consolidate the children’s counting skills, all staff take every opportunity to ask the children to count and use relevant mathematical concepts and language such as ‘more than’, ‘less than’, ‘taller’, and ‘shorter’. During the mathematics activity observed, the children showed good skills in counting in tens to and from 100. Most of the reception children count beyond 30, and higher-attaining children are confident with numbers to 50, and could recall some addition and subtraction facts to ten. The children use number jigsaws to reinforce their quick recognition of numbers and numerals and most children can write numerals with reasonable accuracy. Sand and water play and the use of a range of construction equipment are also opportunities when adults extend the children’s mathematical understanding, such as ‘full and empty’ and ‘heavy and light’. Teachers encourage the children to explain their reasoning and many pupils do so confidently and accurately. Most of the children will meet or exceed the early learning goals in mathematics by the time they start Year 1.
45. A wide range of well-planned activities is used to promote the children’s **knowledge and understanding of the world**. Many children bring a wide general knowledge to their discussions during play activities and in class discussions. Most of the children will achieve or exceed the goals set for them in this area of learning. The teaching is very good and the children achieve well. The staff take every opportunity to make the teaching more interesting and exciting, for example, when a child brought in some stick insects, very useful and informative discussions took place. The children are

encouraged to understand words and the more able children showed a very good understanding of words such as *camouflage* and *nocturnal* when describing the stick insects. The children have access to a wide range of natural and manufactured resources and use their senses to investigate them. The children gain sound early computer skills by dragging and clicking on the mouse to build sentences by identifying appropriate vocabulary, for producing graphs with adult help and for painting activities. The children gain a good understanding of the past through work on holidays and their appreciation of other faiths is effectively developed through the implementation of the religious education syllabus.

46. In terms of their **physical development** the children achieve well and most are in line to exceed the early learning goal in this area. Good progress has been made since the last inspection with the completion of a secure external space for the reception children. Children now use a fenced area during the day and at playtimes and it is used very well for a range of activities. The large pieces of equipment for the children to climb, and the wheeled vehicles that they ride on, help the children develop the skills of balancing and climbing. The hall is used for developing the children's awareness of travelling, throwing and catching balls. The teacher also makes very effective use of the grassed area in good weather to improve the children's movement skills. There is good provision for the children's development and control over smaller movements through the use of tools and construction toys and through the use of malleable materials, such as play dough. The children make good progress in pencil and brush control and in the use of scissors, for example, when they were making paper aeroplanes and kites.
47. The children achieve well in the **creative development** area of learning and most of them will exceed the goals set for them by the time they are in Year 1. There is a good balance of child-initiated painting, printing and drawing activities and teacher-directed work designed to improve skills. There is evident progression in the children's visual artwork during their time in the reception class and the children have a good range of media to choose from. The children also have numerous opportunities to develop their creative skills by planning and designing, singing songs, making and listening to music and through exciting opportunities for imaginative role-play. The adults give status to role-play by sensitive intervention that enables to children to stay on task and develop their ideas further.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **very good**.

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

- Since the last inspection, there has been very good improvement in provision.
- The standard of work pupils achieve by the end of Year 6 is very high in comparison with other schools.
- Pupils are provided with very good opportunities to develop their literacy skills and to use information and communication technology to aid their learning.
- The presentation and marking of pupils' work is not of a consistently high standard.

## Commentary

48. At the time of the last inspection, pupils were achieving high standards. Since then the school has been successful in maintaining good standards in Years 1 and 2. In the junior classes, pupils are achieving better than before in all aspects of the subject. As a consequence, their good attainment is now very good, with a very high percentage of pupils achieving standards that exceed the national average by the time they are aged 11. Standards have been maintained at Key Stage 1 and improved at Key Stage 2 because of improved leadership and management, better and more consistent teaching and even better attitudes towards work by the pupils.
49. Inspection evidence indicates that, by the end of Year 2, standards in speaking and listening, reading and writing are above average. In the three years prior to 2003, test results show the picture has been similar with any slight variations being accounted for by the size of the cohort and the percentage of pupils who have had special educational needs. The provisional national test results for 2004 indicate that standards are similar. When compared with similar schools, attainment is well above average in both reading and writing, with a much higher than average proportion of pupils attaining above average standards in reading and a high percentage in writing. In 2003, national test results for pupils in Year 6 show attainment to be very high compared with those found nationally and also in relation to pupils' prior attainment, and this is confirmed by work seen during the inspection. More pupils than expected also achieve higher than average standards in English. The provisional results for 2004 indicate a similar trend.
50. One of the main reasons for pupils' very good achievement is the consistently high standard of teaching they receive throughout the school. Teachers make good use of information they gain from thorough checks and reviews they make of pupils' progress. These are particularly effective in Years 4, 5 and 6. This is evident as they give pupils work that is challenging and well matched to their learning needs. Most pupils with special educational needs do not require additional education plans for long periods of time as they make very good progress because of the suitability of the work they are given, the good additional support from teaching assistants and the speedy response made to any potential difficulties they encounter in their learning.
51. In all aspects of the subject, basic skills are well taught, including initial letter sounds in reading and punctuation in writing. Another strength of teaching is the consistently good use teachers make of information and communication technology to promote learning. Opportunities are very well planned, and, in some lessons observed, this had a significant impact upon the rate of pupils' learning. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 have used information and communication technology to word process letters and reports, whilst also utilising computers to undertake research.
52. In discussion with pupils, it was evident they have good ideas, a wide-ranging vocabulary and the ability to use imaginative and descriptive narrative to enliven their writing. They readily commit their thoughts to paper, but also enjoy the opportunity to present arguments through drama and role-play. They are provided with good opportunities to develop both their speaking and listening skills and during these occasions are very responsive, but also considerate and sensitive towards others who may wish to express differing opinions.
53. Pupils are provided with regular opportunities to practise their reading skills. They read avidly for both pleasure and information. Teachers promote a love of literature through the care they take in selecting reading material that is appealing to the age and interests of their pupils. Lower ability pupils benefit from additional support and extra

time to develop their fluency and application of reading strategies. However, because the library is used as a teaching area, this limits the opportunities pupils have to use the facility independently or spontaneously.

54. Most, but not all, teachers have high expectations of handwriting and how pupils set out their work. Therefore, in most classes, pupils' work is neat and the standard of handwriting is good. The infants and younger junior pupils need more guidance and regular prompts about how they are expected to present their work. At times teachers do not take enough care with the quality of their own writing so that pupils have consistently good models to follow. Most teachers follow the school's marking policy very effectively. However, there are examples of teachers not providing helpful comments about ways in which pupils could improve their work. Pupils all have writing targets to achieve, but in some cases, record sheets for monitoring their progress are not dated or completed regularly enough. The school improvement plan includes realistic criteria for maintaining the very good provision based upon very good self-evaluation and monitoring of performance.

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

55. Teachers provide a lot of work in other subjects that helps pupils practise and develop their literacy skills. For example, in history, pupils write accounts of what they have learned. In geography, teachers develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of technical vocabulary through good use of open-ended questioning, which encourages pupils to respond with thorough explanations. In science, pupils are given research tasks, using books and computers to find out facts about teeth, plants and animals.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well, and those in Years 3-6 achieve very well.
- Standards are above average at the end of Year 2 and well above average at the end of Year 6.
- Teachers are very good at providing pupils with challenging and demanding tasks.
- Very good assessment procedures are effectively used.
- The subject is very well led and managed.

### **Commentary**

56. The 2003 National Curriculum test results for Year 2 showed attainment to be above the national average and above average when compared with similar schools. Test results for Year 6 pupils indicated attainment to be well above average and well above average when compared to similar schools on the basis of prior attainment. Inspection findings confirm the above standards with pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieving well and those in Years 3-6 achieving very well. There is no significant difference in the achievement of boys and girls. Current standards also indicate a good improvement since the last inspection.
57. Teaching and learning are good in Years 1 and 2 and very good in Years 3-6. All lessons are well planned and clear learning objectives are set which effectively focus pupils on their tasks. Plenary sessions are used well to consolidate the learning. In the

lessons where teaching and learning are very good, teachers' very good subject knowledge and understanding enables them to challenge their pupils through well directed and suitably demanding questions. Pupils are well motivated and their very good attitudes are a strong contributory factor to their high achievement. A notable feature of all classes is the very good relationships evident between teachers, support staff and pupils. Teachers value individual contributions and this raises pupils' self-esteem and gives them confidence to contribute in class. Pupils display a mature attitude and work together effectively in pairs and small groups. The very good teaching seen in Years 3-6 is based around good teaching strategies where lessons begin with well paced mental activities involving all class members and followed by well differentiated and challenging tasks. In these lessons, the session at the end of the lesson is clearly focused on the lesson's learning objectives and is well used to consolidate learning and to correct any errors in pupils' perceptions.

58. Very good strategies are in place to support pupils of different abilities, including those pupils gifted in mathematics. Teachers make very good use of information and communication technology in their teaching and this enlivens lesson presentation. Pupils' skills in information and communication technology are also very well used to reinforce learning.
59. The subject is very well led and managed. The co-ordinator has a clear vision for the development of mathematics and this has been influential in raising standards in Years 3-6. Teaching and learning are effectively monitored and pupils' work is regularly scrutinised. There are very good procedures in place for assessing pupils' attainment and progress, and very good use is made of the data. Individual pupils' targets are challenging but achievable and this helps pupils to become aware of their own learning and what they need to do to improve.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

60. Mathematics is well used across the curriculum in Years 1 and 2 and very well used in Years 3-6. Scrutiny of pupils' work in Years 1 and 2 showed that pupils collected data and represented their results as block graphs and their conclusions were realistic. In Years 3-6, pupils display accuracy in their work, as when measuring in science and design and technology, and display their work graphically, often using their good information and communication technology skills.

### **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **very good**.

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

- The pupils attain very high standards in national tests.
- Teaching is very good.
- Leadership and management of the subject are very good.
- The pupils' presentation of work could be better.

#### **Commentary**

61. The standards attained by the pupils in national tests at the end of Year 6 has been well above the national average in each of the years since the previous inspection. Provisional test results for 2004 show that attainment is likely to be very high, with all of

the pupils attaining at least the expected Level 4 and almost 75 per cent of the pupils attaining Level 5 – above the level expected for pupils of this age. Teacher assessments at the end of Year 2 indicate that the pupils achieve very well with a high proportion of them attaining the above average Level 3. Inspection evidence confirms the high standards obtained in the tests and through teacher assessments. Pupils achieve well in all aspects of the subject, although the school has identified the need to provide the pupils with more opportunities to carry out investigative activities that the pupils plan for themselves. Improvement since the previous inspection has been good.

62. Teaching and learning is never less than good and is more often very good. The teachers have very good subject knowledge which has been gained through systematic staff development activities, the identification of areas of relative weakness when test papers have been analysed, and through the monitoring of the pupils' work and the quality of teaching. A particular strength of the teaching is the way in which the teachers identify the needs of the various groups of pupils and plan work so that it matches the needs of all. This ensures that all pupils achieve well and attain the standards of which they are capable. The teachers question the pupils very well, providing them with good opportunities to explain their answers and to identify what they understand. The teachers move the lessons along at a brisk pace and the pupils enjoy lessons.
63. Although the standard of science work attained by the pupils is always good, pupils do not always take care with the presentation of their work. Occasionally, there is an overuse of worksheets, particularly in the infants, and these do not help the pupils to present their work neatly. They also limit the opportunity for the pupils to determine how they should set out their work, particularly when writing the results of investigations.
64. The subject is very well co-ordinated. The assessment data that is collected from the teachers' assessments and from the National Curriculum tests and optional tests is very carefully analysed, identifying areas of the curriculum that could be improved. The co-ordinator has provided very good support for colleagues, enabling them to improve their subject knowledge and skills. Expertise in science has also been shared with other schools, enabling them to improve the standards attained by their pupils. The co-ordinator has sought out new ideas and has been vigilant in determining the effect that staffing changes have had on the progress made by pupils.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The pupils develop good computer skills.
- Teaching is good.
- The subject is very well resourced.
- ICT is used very effectively to promote learning in other subjects.

## Commentary

64. Standards in ICT are above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, and the pupils achieve well throughout the school. The pupils have regular access to computers and develop a good range of skills. The pupils are introduced to computers in the reception class and word-processing skills are developed well in all classes. Keyboard and mouse skills are good and the pupils are confident in loading and saving information using passwords. The pupils have access to a wide range of computer peripherals including digital cameras, equipment for measuring light and heat and for controlling equipment. As well as developing the pupils' ICT skills, the use of this additional equipment helps to develop the pupils' science and design and technology knowledge. Improvement since the previous inspection has been very good.
65. Teaching and learning is good. The teachers have good subject knowledge, particularly those in the juniors, and they use this knowledge very effectively to enhance the pupils' understanding. Teachers also support one another very effectively so that those with a greater understanding pass on their skills to others. The teaching is good because there are very clear learning objectives that are shared with the pupils. There is no wasted time and the teachers make the lessons fun, ensuring the pupils make good progress because they enjoy what they are doing. The teachers make very effective use of the interactive whiteboards, both in classrooms and in the computer suite.
66. The information and communication technology suite has recently been relocated. There is a good number of machines in the suite and this enables all pupils in a class to be taught computer skills. In addition, there are machines in classrooms that are used by individuals and small groups of pupils to access information during lessons. The school has ensured that there is a very good range of computer software to support learning in all areas of the subject. For example, in a good Year 3 lesson, the pupils enhanced their composition skills effectively through the good use of a program that supported this aspect of music.

## Information and communication technology across the curriculum

67. The teachers make very effective use of computers to support learning in other subjects. For example, in addition to music, the pupils have researched the work of artists such as Jackson Pollock, and produced work in his style. Work in science and mathematics has been enhanced significantly through the use of computers to plot graphs when the pupils have used sensors to measure sound and temperature. Research is carried out through the regular use of the Internet and the pupils use computers to give multimedia presentations.

## HUMANITIES

68. Work was sampled in **history**, although insufficient teaching was observed to make a secure judgement on the overall quality of provision. Scrutiny of pupils' work and discussion with pupils indicates that they have acquired a satisfactory level of historical knowledge about the periods in history that they have studied. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the concept of chronology, although even the older pupils could not recall important dates in history and could only talk about a limited number of important historical figures. However, there are gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding that indicate some weaknesses in the overall provision. The limited amount of time devoted to the subject does not enable pupils to build their skills and understanding systematically over time.

## Geography

Provision in geography is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in Year 6 have a good understanding of environmental issues.
- Geographical enquiry and skills are not taught with sufficient regularity to ensure that pupils build their skills systematically.
- In aspects of geography studied, pupils use a good geographical vocabulary.

### Commentary

69. Standards are in line with expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, although pupils do not achieve as well as they should. Scrutiny of pupils' work and discussion with pupils of all ages indicates, however, that there is considerable variation in pupils' knowledge and understanding, and this reflects weaknesses in curricular provision. Pupils spoke vividly of topics they had undertaken in the last year and it was obvious that they had been well taught with good learning opportunities for pupils. However, the gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding indicated that pupils did not have sufficient opportunities to develop their skills and understanding in a progressive way and to build on what they had learnt.
70. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Lessons are well planned and teachers use questions well to develop pupils' ideas. Relationships are very good and pupils' contributions valued. Pupils have good attitudes and work together collaboratively. Teachers use a good geographical vocabulary and this vocabulary is reflected in pupils' work. Scrutiny of pupils' work and discussion with pupils in Year 6 indicate that good teaching had enabled pupils to develop a good understanding of a local environmental issue and of local decision-making procedures. Pupils were able to set out the arguments for and against such changes in the environment and this indicated good teaching with good learning opportunities. Discussion with pupils showed that they had, over time, studied different localities and had a basic understanding of how climatic and other physical conditions affect lifestyles both in the United Kingdom and in less developed countries.
71. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. Assessment procedures are in place and some scrutiny of pupils' work takes place. The school is aware of the deficiencies in the subject and the school's provision is due to be reviewed for the next year.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

72. In **music**, one lesson and a whole school assembly were observed. In the lesson, teaching and learning were good. Because of this, pupils achieved well and attained standards in line with national expectations. Pupils were provided with effective opportunities to compose, perform and appraise their own work and that of their classmates. The lesson was well planned and reflected thoughtful links to work in other subjects. The theme was based upon rivers and the water cycle. Pupils made imaginative use of percussion instruments to create different effects, and the teacher's own knowledge and understanding of the subject was good, so she was able to

stimulate pupils' ideas. In assembly, pupils sang tunefully and with expression. They are able to modulate their voices to express the mood of the hymns they sing and follow the instrumental accompaniment with precision. Pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 also have the opportunity to avail themselves of additional music tuition provided by visiting specialist teachers, and thought is being given to providing recorder tuition in response to parental requests. Teachers make some effective use of information and communication technology to help pupils learn music through the use of programs such as 'Compose World'.

73. Due to the timetable constraints, too little work was seen in **art and design** to make an overall judgement on provision. However, aspects of the subjects were observed, pupils' work and teachers' planning documents were scrutinised, and discussions with pupils were held. Throughout the school, teachers present attractive displays of pupils' work in art and design. In discussion with pupils, they speak with pride about their achievements and can recall in detail how they produced some unusual and high quality work using silk printing techniques inspired by observational drawings of plants and flowers. The general standard of work on display and in pupils' sketchbooks is in line with national expectations. It indicates that the curriculum, teaching and pupils' achievements are satisfactory. Teachers endeavour to enrich pupils' learning by making links with other subjects, such as history and science. In the Year 2/3 class, some imaginative use of information and communication technology enhances pupils' work in creating designs using digital photographs of patterns found in the environment. Pupils have gained additional inspiration by studying the work of Jackson Pollock and L.S. Lowry. However, using the work of well-known artists as a stimulus is not sufficiently utilised. More use could also be made of visits to art galleries and inviting artists to work alongside the pupils in school. The use made of sketchbooks is variable. Not all teachers have a sufficiently good knowledge of how best to use them. As a result, pupils do not experiment sufficiently with techniques, media, texture or effect.

## **Design and technology**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The quality of provision has been maintained since the last inspection, in spite of some shortages in resources and limitations imposed by the accommodation.
- Good use is made of sketchbooks for designing and planning in the junior classes.
- Not all aspects of the subject are planned and taught sufficiently well.

## **Commentary**

74. Pupils continue to achieve satisfactory standards of work, and this reflects a similar picture to that found at the time of the last inspection. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Nevertheless, during the inspection, some good practice was seen in both infant and junior classes. The school has identified the need to develop provision for design technology further and, because of this, it is a priority in the current school improvement plan. The headteacher, who is a subject specialist, has a very clear vision with regard to what requires to be improved. The co-ordinator has undertaken an audit of the topics taught and the range of available resources in order to evaluate any impact these have on the quality and range of learning opportunities given to pupils. Within the school, there is limited space to store a sufficiently wide range of tools and materials as well as examples of prototypes for pupils to examine and take apart. Large items of pupils' project work cannot be stored once they are completed

due to the lack of space. This means that opportunities to evaluate planned and completed projects are curtailed.

75. A strength of teaching and curriculum provision is the use made of sketchbooks for planning and designing work. A scrutiny of pupils' books provided a good range of evidence that, in spite of the above-mentioned restrictions, the breadth of learning opportunities they receive is satisfactory. Pupils in Year 4, for example, have made their own biscuits after having evaluated a range of commercial products. They selected elements of design and a combination of ingredients to create their own products. Other topics have included designing and making storybooks with moving parts, and moving toys which incorporated the use of a cam mechanism. The work in sketchbooks belonging to pupils in Year 6 shows good progress in the topics they have been taught. Linked to a 'carnival' theme, they designed a piece of headgear, annotated sketches for a 'shelter', analysing different frame structures and materials, as well as designing and making slippers. Examples of their slippers displayed in class show the finished products to be of a satisfactory standard.
76. Throughout the school, pupils make some of the best progress in food technology. This is because teachers are able to plan and provide better learning opportunities in this aspect of the subject. The pupils in Years 5 and 6 have undertaken substantial research as part of their topic about bread. Good links were evident with other subjects, including geography and information and communication technology. Pupils learned about the process of bread making, including making their own. They studied the commercial systems involved in bulk manufacturing and distribution, as well as sampling breads from around the world. However, not every aspect of the subject is planned or taught in such detail, because materials and space are restricted. More projects need to be provided which enable pupils to utilise a greater range of mechanical and electrical components, mouldable materials, together with stiff and flexible sheet materials. Opportunities to employ finishing techniques and use a range of equipment are also underdeveloped. As part of the school improvement plan, initiatives are being explored to exploit specialist knowledge and skills of visitors in order to enrich the curriculum.

## **Physical education**

Provision in physical education is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good teaching enables pupils to attain skills in games that are above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- A good number of pupils participate in out-of-school activities.
- The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and knowledgeable.

### **Commentary**

77. The lack of a flat, grassed area has not been a barrier to raising standards in physical education, particularly in the pupils' games skills. The teachers make very effective use of the hard playground areas to teach the skills of ball control and in defending and attacking in team games. The pupils are taught the basic skills of passing and controlling balls in the infants, and these early skills are developed very well as the pupils move through the school. In a very good lesson with older juniors, the pupils demonstrated very good skills in their ability to pass a rugby ball, whilst looking for space and whilst the defenders tried to close down the space. The teacher had a very

good knowledge of the rules of rugby and of how to encourage all pupils get the most out of lessons. As a result, all pupils, including those who were less confident in passing and receiving a ball, made good gains in their skill development. All aspects of the curriculum are covered in sufficient depth, although the school has acknowledged the need consider how it might reorganise the timetable to provide the pupils with more opportunities for physical education.

78. The school encourages the pupils to participate in out-of-school activities. Although some activities were initially aimed at encouraging the more talented pupils, no pupils are discouraged from attending. For example, a large number of boys and girls of all abilities attend the 'Tag Rugby' sessions. A good number of pupils attend the Irish dancing activities and they are proud to perform during assemblies to their peers and parents.
79. The co-ordinator leads the subject very well. She has a very good understanding of the subject and recognises its importance as part of the curriculum. She has identified how the subject might be improved and has brought to the school a high level of skill that has been shared with other staff.

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

Provision in personal, social and health education and citizenship is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The subject is well led and managed.
- There is a well run school council, which helps pupils to understand citizenship.
- The school is good at promoting personal and social development in all aspects of school life.

### **Commentary**

80. This area of the curriculum is promoted well throughout the school, not only through planned sessions but also by all staff during the school day. Lessons are well planned and, in good lessons seen, pupils' feelings were fully explored in an interesting and motivating way. A good feature of another lesson was the value put upon pupils' opinions. The pupils contributed well and 'circle time' was used effectively to understand the roles of various groups in the community.
81. The whole-school curriculum plan includes good provision for all aspects of the curriculum area and ensures that the pupils gain a good understanding of the effects of sexual relationships and drugs, as well as the role of citizenship. Pupils are also well supported in road safety and keeping healthy. In Year 6, pupils are also very well supported in the transition from primary to secondary school through the scheme of work.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

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