

INSPECTION REPORT

St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Winsford

LEA area: Cheshire

Unique reference number: 111386

Headteacher: Miss J. D. Chwastek

Lead inspector: Mr P. Martin

Dates of inspection: 24 – 27 May 2004

Inspection number: 257742

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

© Crown copyright 2004

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

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	3 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	256
School address:	Woodford Lane Winsford Cheshire
Postcode:	CW7 2JS
Telephone number:	01606 592973
Fax number:	01606 863552
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Fr S. Dwyer
Date of previous inspection:	27 April 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- St Joseph's Catholic Primary School is a large school catering for 281 boys and girls aged 3 to 11 years.
- Most pupils come from a white British background.
- A small number of pupils have a range of different ethnic backgrounds, including a very small number from Traveller family backgrounds.
- At the time of the inspection, very few pupils were at an early stage of learning English.
- The percentage of pupils with special educational needs, about 18 per cent, is higher than the national average.
- The percentage of pupils having Statements of Special Educational Need, just over 1 per cent, is similar to the national average.
- The percentage of pupils who have free school meals, about 10 per cent, is similar to the national average.
- Pupils come from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds, but this is average overall.
- Pupils' attainment on entry is below average.
- The number of pupils leaving and joining the school at other than the usual times last year was low.
- A new headteacher and deputy headteacher have recently been appointed (January 2004).

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
23262	Mr P. Martin	Lead inspector	Science, information and communication technology, music, physical education, English as an additional language
9428	Mrs J. Butler	Lay inspector	
22657	Mr M. Madeley	Team inspector	English, geography, history
10068	Mrs A. Wilkinson-Tilbrook	Team inspector	Foundation Stage, special educational needs, mathematics, art and design, design and technology, personal, social and health education

The inspection contractor was:

Altecq Education Limited
 102 Bath Road
 Cheltenham
 Gloucestershire
 GL53 7JX

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

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	8
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	11
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	15
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS	17
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	28

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **satisfactory** and improving school which provides **reasonable** value for money. Pupils achieve satisfactorily because of a satisfactory quality of teaching and learning. Leadership and management are **satisfactory**.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Leadership and management by the new headteacher and deputy headteacher are good.
- Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are good.
- Standards in science are below average by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils' achievement in information and communication technology (ICT) is unsatisfactory in Years 3 to 6.
- Foundation Stage provision is good.
- The curriculum is ill-considered and some subjects are not sufficiently covered.
- The school's procedures for measuring pupils' progress, and the use of these to improve teaching and learning are unsatisfactory.
- Some aspects of the provision for pupils with special educational needs are unsatisfactory.

There has been an **unsatisfactory** degree of improvement since the last inspection. A number of the key issues from that report have not been successfully dealt with. Although curriculum planning is now based on government recommended strategies and guidelines, it still does not fully meet the needs of all pupils. Systems for monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning are unsatisfactory. Assessment procedures are inconsistent, providing little useful information to help teachers to match work to pupils' needs. Although pupils with special educational needs do not now miss subjects when they are withdrawn from lessons, they do not make enough progress in withdrawal sessions. However, the new headteacher and deputy headteacher, who have been in post since January of this year, have recognised that improvement has been unsatisfactory and, through good leadership, have initiated sustainable improvements.

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	E	A	A
Mathematics	C	C	C	C
Science	D	D	D	D

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

Achievement is **satisfactory** overall. Achievement in the Foundation Stage is **good**. Children start the nursery with attainment below that expected from children of that age and reach the expected learning goals in personal and social development, communications, language and literacy, mathematical understanding, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development by the end of the reception year. By the end of Year 2, pupils have achieved satisfactorily but have not reached the expected standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Pupils currently in Year 6 started Year 3 with broadly average standards in English and mathematics, have achieved satisfactorily overall and maintained satisfactory standards in these subjects. However, standards in science are below average. Although most pupils will achieve the expected levels, not enough reach higher levels. Achievement and standards of attainment in ICT are unsatisfactory for pupils in Years 3 to 6. They are not taught a wide enough range of skills. Pupils with special educational needs achieve satisfactorily in relation to their prior attainment because of

the satisfactory support they receive in class. Pupils who speak English as an additional language and the very few pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds, including Traveller pupils, are soundly supported and their achievement is satisfactory.

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is **satisfactory**. Pupils are polite and most enjoy being in school. Their **good** attitudes and behaviour reflect this enthusiasm.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is **satisfactory** overall. Teaching and learning are **satisfactory** overall. They are good in the Foundation Stage and lead to good achievement. In Years 1 to 6, teaching and learning are satisfactory. The school's procedures for measuring pupils' progress and using the findings for planning work are **unsatisfactory**, so tasks are sometimes not matched well enough to pupils' ability. The curriculum is **unsatisfactory** because, in some non-core subjects, it does not allow a coherent development of skills for pupils in mixed age and these are not taught in sufficient depth or breadth. The enrichment of the curriculum through visits, visitors and clubs is **good**, however. The school has **satisfactory** links with parents, the local community and with other schools. Provision for ensuring pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are **satisfactory**.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **satisfactory** overall. The new headteacher is ably supported by the new deputy headteacher and both are working hard to overcome the challenges presented by the recent period of uncertainty. They have identified effectively what needs to be done to address the outcomes of unsatisfactory improvement since the last inspection and have initiated effective plans for doing so. The governing body carries out its work **satisfactorily**. However, governors have not ensured that statutory requirements are fulfilled. The special needs policy does not reflect the requirements of the Code of Practice. The new chair of the governing body is fully committed to raising standards and governors are very supportive of the school.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are positive about the school and are pleased with developments that have taken place since the new headteacher took up post. A few parents expressed their concern about possible bullying and other forms of harassment. The inspection team found that most of these incidents took place some time ago. The school now encourages good behaviour and the very few instances that occur are effectively and quickly dealt with. A few parents of children with special educational needs felt that provision for their children was not as good as it should be. The inspection team also found shortcomings in provision for these pupils' needs. Most pupils are happy at school, but a few are guarded in their relationships with others.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- improve standards in science by the end of Year 6;
- improve pupils' achievement in ICT in Years 3 to 6;
- ensure that the curriculum fully meets the needs of all pupils;
- improve and implement procedures for measuring pupils' progress and their use;
- improve provision for pupils with special educational needs;

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- ratify a special needs policy that meets the requirements of the relevant Code of Practice.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Achievement in the Foundation Stage is **good**. Boys and girls of all abilities in Years 1 to 6, including those with special educational needs, achieve **satisfactorily**. At the end of Year 2, standards are below average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. At the end of Year 6, standards are average in English and mathematics, but below average in science and information and communication technology (ICT). Boys and girls achieve at a similar level. The very few pupils from ethnic minority groups, including Traveller pupils, achieve as well as their classmates.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the nursery and reception classes achieve well.
- Pupils in Years 3 to 6 have not learned a wide enough range of information and communication technology skills.

Foundation Stage

1. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well. When they start in the nursery and reception classes, children's experiences of learning are below those for the age group. They achieve well because of the good quality of their education. By the end of the reception year, they reach the expected early learning goals.¹

Key Stage 1

2. Pupils in the current Year 2 started Year 1 with below average attainment and have achieved satisfactorily, but standards in reading, writing and mathematics are below average. Inspection judgements are similar to the results of last year's national tests at the end of Year 2. In both reading and writing, standards were below average. Although last year's national tests show that Year 2 pupils' performance was average last year, standards are below average this year because fewer than the expected proportion of pupils reached higher levels.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.2 (15.9)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	13.7 (14.2)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	16.2 (17.1)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 30 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3. In 2003, teachers judged that the number of pupils reaching the expected level in science was well below average. This year, pupils have a greater understanding of scientific investigation skills and this has enhanced their understanding of other areas of the subject. Nonetheless, standards in science are below average. Pupils achieve well in information and communication technology and standards match those expected for pupils at the end of Year 2.

¹ Early learning goals - these are expectations for most children to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage. They refer mainly to achievements children make in connection with personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development. There are many goals for each area of learning, for example, in language and literacy children should be able to write their own name and other things such as labels and begin to write simple sentences.

Key Stage 2

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	29.4 (25.6)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	26.9 (26.6)	26.8 (26.7)
science	28.0 (28.1)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 43 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

- Over the last five years, the trend in the school's performance in English, mathematics and science has been similar to that found nationally. Over the last three years, boys and girls have performed similarly to boys and girls nationally.
- In 2003, results of the National Curriculum tests for Year 6 pupils showed that pupils' performance in the core subjects, compared with standards in all schools nationally and with schools of similar prior attainment, were:
 - well above average in English;
 - average in mathematics;
 - below average in science.
- Last year the Year 6 pupils were felt to be particularly able in English. This year, standards in English and mathematics are average but below average in science. Although most pupils are at the expected level in science, not as many as last year have reached higher levels. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 achieve unsatisfactorily in information and communication technology because they are not taught a wide enough range of skills. As a result, standards are below what they ought to be.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve satisfactorily. They are soundly supported in classrooms, but less so in withdrawal sessions. There is not enough tracking of pupils showing difficulties in learning. Where there is intervention, this has too limited an impact on pupils' progress
- There are very few pupils from ethnic minority groups, none of whom are at an early stage of learning English. They achieve as well as classmates, as do those very few pupils from a Traveller background. The school, with the help of the local education authority's Traveller Education Service, makes satisfactory provision for their learning and welfare.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils have **good** attitudes to learning. They behave **well**. Their personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **satisfactory**. Attendance and punctuality are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy coming to school and their attendance is good.
- Pupils are keen to learn and try hard in lessons.
- Behaviour is good in lessons and at play.
- Relationships are good and this helps pupils' personal development as well as their learning.
- However, a few pupils are wary about joining in the social aspects of school.
- Previous staffing problems have led to some unsettled behaviour, which present staff are managing well.

Commentary

9. Pupils’ personal development is one of the school’s strengths and illustrates some of the improvements experienced in recent months. The great majority of pupils enjoy coming to school but a few have reservations about working and playing with their classmates. This seems to relate to insecurity experienced in the past, when problems with staffing meant some pupils had a number of changes in the classroom. During the inspection, and from talking to parents, it seems that behaviour is now good and underpinned by good relationships and good classroom management. As a result, pupils are developing into happy learners who concentrate well and try hard. This has a positive impact on their learning.

10. Behaviour in lessons is good and in the two classes which have in the past suffered the most from staff changes, problems are managed very well. Behaviour at play is harmonious and friendly, although there can be some boisterous play by the boys. About one-fifth of the parents who responded felt that there may have been incidents of bullying or harassment in the past, but the consensus is that pupils are now managed well. Pupils themselves now say they are confident that any problems are sorted out immediately. There have been no recorded incidents of bullying since the beginning of the spring term, an indication of the more settled atmosphere at school.

11. From their entry into the Foundation Stage children are keen to learn and respond well to challenging and interesting lessons. For example, children in the nursery and reception classes were captivated by the idea of putting musical sounds into a magic box and so followed musical instructions very carefully. Older pupils work conscientiously and carry out instructions carefully. They are not, however, given enough opportunities to take initiative in lessons, for example to ask and answer their own questions in science, or generally to take responsibility for their own learning. This reduces their ability to develop independent learning habits.

12. In lessons, pupils with special educational needs have positive relationships with their classmates. They co-operate with others and listen well, often showing enthusiasm for their work. When pupils are withdrawn from lessons the work is not always matched well enough to their abilities and they sometimes have difficulty concentrating on the task so their learning is hampered.

13. Personal development is satisfactory. The school’s systems are used well to promote the spiritual and moral development of pupils. The use of praise and encouragement is good, as is the promotion of positive role models. The Catholic ethos of the school pervades all aspects of school life. The popularity of the recently introduced Special Mention assembly each week illustrates the success of the school’s initiative to make all pupils feel special. Pupils have played an active part in creating the ‘Golden Rules’ for behaviour and clearly understand right from wrong. They are very enthusiastic supporters of charitable fundraising for the less fortunate. Participation in a residential visit enhances Year 6 pupils’ social development. Their preparation for life in a diverse and multicultural society is satisfactory as they learn to respect the contributions of people from a range of cultures in areas like art, music and poetry.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll		
White – British		219	Number of fixed period exclusions
		1	0

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

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	4.2
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.6
National data	0.4

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

14. Attendance is good and pupils arrive at school on time. However, teachers are not consistent in their recording and monitoring of absences.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a **satisfactory** quality of education. Teaching and learning are **satisfactory**, but assessment and the curriculum are **unsatisfactory**. The provision for extra-curricular activities is **good**. The school provides a **satisfactory** level of care. Links with parents and the community are also **satisfactory**.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching is **satisfactory**, leading to **satisfactory** learning. The use of assessment procedures to improve teaching and learning is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers in the Foundation Stage plan well, effectively ensuring that all children make good progress towards achieving the early learning goals.
- Assessment in Years 1 to 6 is inconsistent and underused in planning work that matches pupils' ability.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour, using the school's well thought out behaviour management systems effectively.
- Pupils show a good deal of perseverance and interest in their work.

Commentary

15. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. During the inspection a number of lessons were of better quality than this. However, there is not yet enough consistently good-quality teaching to raise standards and achievement further. The quality of learning has been maintained since the last inspection. At that time, pupils made satisfactory progress. Achievement is now satisfactory.
16. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good and leads to a good quality of learning. Staff work well as a team, ensuring that children experience a rich and varied curriculum. They gauge children's progress well and use the information effectively to plan lessons and activities that result in a good quality of learning.
17. In Years 1 to 6, teachers plan lessons that help all pupils to achieve satisfactorily. Usually, teachers share the purposes of the lesson with the class. This helps pupils to learn because they know what is expected of them. Sometimes, however, these purposes are not clear and outline only the activities that the pupils will undertake. Thus, these lessons have a less sharp focus. A strong feature of teaching throughout the school is the teachers' insistence on good behaviour. As a result, pupils behave well and work hard, thus enhancing their learning. If pupils' attention does wander, teachers have good strategies for renewing their interest. In a difficult Years 3 and 4 class, which had suffered some disruption because of staffing changes, the teacher ensured that pupils were attentive and contributed ideas in a science lesson about forces. In some cases, the teacher has a good grasp of the subject and guides class

discussions well. The teacher of a Year 5 science lesson about evaporation knew the requirements of the subject and asked for ideas and, importantly, explanations. This developed pupils' speaking and listening skills effectively, as well as their scientific understanding. The quality of teachers' marking is satisfactory overall and in a few cases good. At its most effective, it provides a good deal of detail about what pupils have done well, what needs to be improved and opens a dialogue with pupils. Sometimes, however, it does not pick up enough on weaknesses, for example, misspellings of words that pupils should know, or of subject vocabulary.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 37 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	4 (11%)	15 (41%)	17 (46%)	1 (3%)	0	0

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

18. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall. The quality of plans drawn up for their individual improvement varies considerably. Where they are most effective, for example in the Foundation Stage, they are well designed and have specific, measurable targets that help children to improve. Other pupils' plans are mostly too vague and lack enough information to help them achieve. For example, one typically inadequate success criterion was: 'that reading improves and is enjoyed'. However, in many lessons teachers modify the work for the pupils with special educational needs enough to ensure that they make the same progress as others in the class. Pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Need are effectively included in lessons and have well-planned support from the teaching assistant. Where pupils are withdrawn they do not achieve well enough. Lesson content does not reflect the pupils' targets and work is not suitably matched to their abilities. As a result, their progress is unsatisfactory in these lessons.

19. Assessment procedures in Years 1 to 6 are unsatisfactory and have not improved enough since the last inspection. Systems for gauging pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science are either inconsistent or undeveloped. They do not provide enough information to be useful in planning lessons. Individual teachers use some systems to collect data about what levels pupils have reached. Few of them use this data to plan work offering enough challenge to all pupils, or to assess whether pupils are making enough progress. This is particularly the case for higher attaining pupils. Although a number of lessons seen during the inspection offered them a satisfactory degree of challenge, pupils' previous work did not consistently reflect this. However, there are positive developments. Recently, teachers have set writing targets for groups of pupils, with the intention of raising the quality of writing. It is too early to judge the impact of these. A few classes have science targets. These, however, are largely aimed at improving presentation rather than developing scientific knowledge and understanding. There are no assessment procedures in ICT. Their planned introduction stalled due to the past uncertainty in leadership and management. The implementation of improved assessment practices is currently a high priority.

The curriculum

The breadth and depth of the planned curriculum is **unsatisfactory**, but pupils' learning is enriched by **good** extra-curricular activities and visits. Accommodation and resources are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is not planned well enough to take account of mixed-age classes.
- Teaching staff all offer at least one after-school activity.
- The school has ample space in which to teach the curriculum, but this is not always used to the best advantage.

Commentary

20. The school meets statutory requirements to teach the National Curriculum and religious education and to conduct a daily act of collective worship for all pupils. The headteacher is well aware that there are problems with the curriculum but has not yet had time to tackle them. These problems stem from topic planning not fully taking into account the mixed age classes in Years 3 to 6. The school has not thoroughly checked that all pupils in the same age group will learn similar knowledge and skills. The teaching day is very short in comparison with recommended times and class timetables do not reflect a good balance between the subjects. For instance, there are various additional literacy activities in Years 1 and 2, as well as a literacy hour each day, yet achievement is only satisfactory.
21. There has been some improvement in provision for pupils with special educational needs since the last inspection in that they work on the same subject as the rest of the class when withdrawn for support. However, in these sessions they do not experience an appropriate curriculum with work matched to their specific needs. Teachers satisfactorily modify the work according to the needs of these pupils in class lessons.
22. There is no formal personal, social and health education programme in place, but provision is satisfactory. In science and physical education, pupils learn about keeping healthy, the value of a balanced diet and the importance of exercise. An old policy, currently under review, guides the sex education programme which consists mainly of topics within the science programme and strong messages about family in the religious education programme. Religious education makes a strong contribution to pupils' development, as does the school's positive Catholic ethos.
23. The school offers a good range of clubs for all ages. Many pupils attend, choosing between sports, music, board games, drama and needlework each term. They involve all staff and some parents, who coach soccer. Educational visits enhance topics on history and science. For example, a recent visit to Tatton Park helped pupils to understand what life was like for an evacuee. Artists visit the school regularly; the good quality felt bags depicting the Great Fire of London are the result of a recent visit. More importantly, the artist also taught the staff, so the skills remain in the school for future use.
24. Accommodation is good. Classrooms in Years 3 to 6 are large and light. Open-plan classrooms in Years 1 and 2 are enhanced by good quality displays of pupils' work, but noise from other classes sometimes inhibits learning. For example, one class was singing, whilst another tried to listen quietly to a story. Specialist rooms, such as the art room and the library, allow teachers the space to develop pupils' ideas and skills, though class teachers used neither room during the inspection. Large playgrounds, fields and the two halls make a positive contribution to the physical education programme. They also allow more activities like drama, personal and social education and group singing to take place. The computer room is of a high quality but is not used enough. The school is well-resourced. This is especially so in English, where a good supply of reading books encourages a desire to read widely and in ICT, in terms of the computer suite and the deployment of computers in Years 1 and 2.

Care, guidance and support

Procedures to ensure pupils' welfare, health and safety are **satisfactory**. Support and guidance for personal and academic development are **satisfactory**. The involvement of pupils in school life through considering their views is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In this caring school, adults place a high priority on the well-being and best interests of pupils.
- Pupils have good relationships with the adults in school with whom they have the most contact.
- Procedures for ensuring the welfare, health and safety of children are good in the Foundation Stage.
- There is good management of behaviour.

- Pastoral care is good.
- Pupils with special educational needs are not well served by all aspects of their support.
- Pupils are too often unclear about what they need to do to improve their work.

Commentary

25. The school places the welfare of all pupils at the centre of its work and health and safety procedures are satisfactory. Pupils and their families are well known to the staff and pupils generally feel confident and secure in the knowledge that their needs will be met. Child protection procedures are sound and in line with local arrangements. There are satisfactory procedures for ensuring a smooth passage for those starting school for the first time or for those who join the school later.
26. Although teachers and support staff provide good support and guidance for aspects of pupils' personal development, especially their behaviour, they do not monitor their academic progress enough. As a result, teachers do not have enough information to be able to set work that matches their ability or to tell them clearly what they need to do next to improve their work. Teachers' use of targets for improvement is inconsistent and they do not usefully share this information with parents, for example, in annual written reports. Recently, however, teachers have started advising pupils what to do to improve their writing, but it is too early to judge the success of this initiative.
27. In lessons with the rest of the class, pupils with special educational needs are well supported by teaching assistants and teachers usually ensure that work is matched to their needs. However, they are not supported as well in sessions in which they work in small groups away from the rest of the class.
28. The involvement of pupils in decision-making is satisfactory and is set to improve. This year the headteacher is introducing social development opportunities, like circle time and playground 'buddies', prior to establishing a formal school council. Pupils were involved in the formulation of the 'golden rules'.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents are **satisfactory** overall and showing signs of improvement. Links with the community are **satisfactory**. There are **satisfactory** and improving links with other schools and colleges.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has successfully created a welcoming approach to parents and laid the foundations for a strong partnership.
- Newsletters are informative and inviting and these help parents to feel increasingly involved in the education of their children.
- There are strong links with the parish.
- The confidence of all parents has yet to be won.
- There is not enough sharing of information about how pupils can improve.

Commentary

29. Since her arrival at the school this year, the headteacher has worked hard to improve and strengthen the links with parents. Parents value her 'open door' approach and her daily accessibility. Teaching staff are well involved in developing the partnership approach. Each term they provide parents with information about forthcoming topics of study and how they can support learning. Parents feel there have been definite improvements in the way they are encouraged to play a part in their children's education.
30. Overall, the quality of information provided for parents is satisfactory. The clearly written and informative newsletters provide good information about school life. Parents appreciate and take

advantage of being able to see school life at first hand through weekly assemblies. However, pupils' annual progress reports do not give parents a clear idea of areas of real strength or weakness, nor do they provide targets for improvement. The headteacher has already identified these issues and introduced a new format for reports to parents, which deals with these omissions. A few parents rightly expressed a concern that they were not given a clear enough idea of how well their child is getting on. Questionnaires also reveal that the school still has some way to go to win the confidence of those parents who feel that their concerns have not been properly addressed in the past.

31. Partnership with parents of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. The school sends them newsletters about items of interest, such as course and meetings. The school also invites parents to all meetings at which their children's progress is discussed and plans for further involvement are drawn up. Too few parents are currently involved in drafting their child's individual education plan, however. The team agrees with the views of those parents of children with special educational needs who expressed concerns about the quality of provision. A few parents expressed a concern that their children had experienced bullying or similar misbehaviour. The team, however, found that there have been very few instances of such behaviour recently. Pupils themselves are confident that such incidents would be dealt with quickly and fairly.
32. Links with the community are satisfactory and centred on the active support provided by the parish church. This includes important preparation work for the children's First Communion and First Forgiveness, as well as church volunteers helping in school.
33. An interesting and beneficial new initiative for the school is its involvement in the local Networked Learning Community. In this, neighbouring schools share best practice and enhance the learning experiences of their pupils. A forthcoming multicultural arts project designed to foster racial awareness is a useful part of this initiative. There are good links with the partner Catholic High School, which enable a smooth transition of pupils to the next phase of their education.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall, the leadership and management of the school are **satisfactory**. The governance of the school is **satisfactory**. The leadership of the school by the headteacher is **good**. The leadership of the school by the other key staff is **satisfactory**. The school is **satisfactorily** managed.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has strong support from all concerned with the school.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher are good role models for staff and pupils.
- The management of a few subjects is unsatisfactory.
- The governing body does not meet statutory requirements regarding special educational needs.

Commentary

34. The recently appointed headteacher, with the full support of her deputy, provides strong leadership for the school. They provide good role models for colleagues and pupils through their willingness to tackle any issue, no matter how big or small. They know the school's areas of strength such as the staff's commitment and use them well to make school an orderly, inviting and stimulating place for the pupils. They are also aware of the school's weaknesses and are steadily tackling them in order of importance. Both head and deputy have been instrumental in raising staff morale after a period of turbulence in management. For example, staff have agreed and consistently implement a policy of rewarding good behaviour. This is improving pupils' response to lessons and giving them more time in which to learn.
35. The headteacher knows that there remains much to do. She has the ideas and ability to correct these weaknesses. A key step in her plans is to ensure that teachers and support staff get adequate training and chances to visit other schools, to broaden their experience and

knowledge of recent educational developments. She has the full support of all involved in the school, including governors, the local authority and the diocese, staff, parents and pupils.

36. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator is doing a good job. Reception and nursery teachers work well together. Good assessment procedures help them plan future learning. Some co-ordinator appointments are fairly recent to those particular subjects. They have picked up where the previous co-ordinator left off and, in some cases, do not yet have enough information to do their jobs fully. In many cases their leadership is satisfactory in that they offer informal support and are beginning to develop their roles. Co-ordinators generally provide a sound role model for colleagues but sometimes their management is unsatisfactory. Few of them have time to monitor lessons or to provide demonstration lessons. Co-ordinators have had few chances to develop assessment procedures so these are weak and have little positive impact on teaching, learning or the curriculum.
37. The leadership of provision for pupils with special educational needs is unsatisfactory. The special needs co-ordinator and the teacher who provides learning support have shared this role since April 2004. Whenever possible, the co-ordinator meets with teaching assistants who support pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Need and with the Traveller Education Service. There is, however, too little monitoring of provision for special needs or evaluation of the effectiveness of individual programmes for pupils. There is, consequently, inconsistency in practice across the school.
38. Under the strong leadership of the new chair, the governing body is now better organised to face the challenges of helping the school to improve. Programmes of meetings are in place and committees empowered to make suggestions to the full body. The governing body has a sound understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of their school, as well as the will and enthusiasm to ensure that it is the best that it can be.
39. Currently the governing body does not meet its statutory duty to have a policy for special educational needs in place and to monitor the provision for these pupils. There is a satisfactory policy in draft form, which awaits the agreement of the governors.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	649,383	Balance from previous year	7,565
Total expenditure	644,720	Balance carried forward to the next	4,663
Expenditure per pupil	2,631		

40. Financial management is satisfactory. Despite high staffing costs and falling numbers of pupils, prudent financial management has ensured that the school has balanced its budget and carried forward a small amount into next year. The school examines any expenditure very carefully. Up-to-date figures are available to the finance committee because careful, accurate records are kept. Governors seek to ensure that they get the best possible value for money and realise that this does not necessarily mean buying the cheapest. For example, the school consults others, including the local authority and colleagues in other schools to see what they do. Two good examples of this are the recent involvement in a computer servicing and curriculum support contract and the employment of the Maintenance Officer, who helps to keep the school in good repair.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **good**.

41. Children's attainment when they start in the nursery class is below that of others of their age. Good provision for children of all capabilities and backgrounds supports good achievement in both the nursery and the reception class. Teaching is good. There are major strengths in the way that teachers and support staff work as a highly effective team in both classes. There is a rich and varied curriculum with detailed planning and assessment.
42. The nursery staff have effectively introduced the 'High Scope' procedures, which focus on children planning their own work, undertaking tasks and reviewing their progress. This supports children's learning and achievement effectively. The provision for children with special educational needs is good. Staff identify these children as soon as possible. They give those with difficulties in learning useful individual education programmes that support their learning well. Pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Need are very well supported.
43. The new Foundation Stage co-ordinator is working hard to develop consistent approaches in the two classes. There is now close liaison between the nursery and the reception class, with productive sharing of planning and curriculum areas. This is a good improvement since the previous inspection. Considerable improvements have also been made in enabling access to a safe outdoor area for the reception class.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well because of good teaching with an emphasis on developing independent learning and the high expectations set by staff.
- The quality of teaching is good.
- Staff consistently provide good activities enabling children to develop this area of learning.

Commentary

44. Nursery children settle into school well. They are beginning to form good relationships with other children. Good teaching promotes independence and co-operation. Children are supported well in a safe, secure environment, where they gain increasing confidence in exploring new and interesting activities.
45. Children in the reception class are excited and motivated to learn. They work co-operatively with other children and as part of a larger group. They select resources for themselves, settle well to tasks and behave sensibly. There is a positive ethos which promotes good achievement in emotional development, independence and behaviour. Children learn well how to respect others' needs and views, for example as they learn about other cultures in role play. They are in line to reach the expected goals by the end of the Foundation Stage.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff use every opportunity to develop the children's language and literacy skills.
- Teaching is very good in the nursery and good in the reception class.

- In both classes, children show an interest in books and respond positively to stories, songs and rhymes.
- In the reception class, many children recognise initial letters and sounds and are beginning to write simple words.

Commentary

46. Children's achievement is good because of good teaching and learning. Children in the afternoon session in the nursery are only three years of age and are at a very early stage in terms of their language development. Some require considerable adult support to communicate. Nursery staff demonstrate skilled questioning, encouraging the children to talk about things that are relevant to them. Children make good progress because of the many opportunities they are given to talk and listen. In the registration session at the start of the day the four-year-olds bring in toys from home and readily talk about them. They show enjoyment in books and select one of their choice, which they take home each day from their library.
47. In the reception class, children are forming their letters correctly in their writing and recall initial letter sounds. All children are learning to write their names and higher attainers are beginning to write short sentences. Staff encourage children to recognise and learn sounds, while helping them to develop their reading and writing skills. Children make good progress so that by the time they start school they are on course to meet the expectations in this area of learning.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff take every opportunity to promote mathematical learning, which ensures that children achieve well.

Commentary

48. Teaching and learning are good in both the nursery and reception class. When they start in the nursery, many of the children do not recognise numbers or the names of colours. Staff plan a range of interesting activities designed to promote children's mathematical understanding and language. At the start of the day, for example, children are encouraged to count the letters in their name as they register their arrival. Staff encourage children to count in a wide range of different situations. They plan effective sand and water activities so that children explore mathematical ideas, for example by measuring and estimating as they empty and fill different containers.
49. In the reception class, children respond well during mathematics lessons and achieve well. They confidently recognise, match and write numbers to ten and higher attaining children are developing addition and subtraction skills. They recognise and make simple patterns, for example, using construction toys to create their own patterns when making paper curtains. There are many good opportunities for children to use numbers in games and activities. The development of mathematical vocabulary is good because staff frequently reinforce it, for example, by using words such as 'more than' and 'less than'. Children achieve well and are therefore likely to attain the national goals for learning in this area.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff plan a good range of interesting activities that stimulate children's curiosity and enhance their understanding.

- Staff make good use of facilities and resources to develop children's knowledge and understanding of the world around them.

Commentary

50. Teaching and learning are very good in the nursery and good in the reception class. All children achieve well and are likely to attain the expected levels by the time they enter Year 1. Teachers plan a wide range of interesting activities, taking every opportunity to develop children's understanding of the world around them. For example, in the nursery, when a tractor arrived at the school, staff asked children stimulating questions, talking about the colour, wheels and speed of the vehicle. Children achieve well because they are constantly encouraged to describe different objects and events and question how things work. Teachers readily check that children understand what they are doing. There are good opportunities for children to use computers and older children use the mouse confidently. They independently use headphones to access the listening centres.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All children now have access to a secure outdoor area with a good range of outdoor resources, which enables them to develop their physical skills effectively.
- Children learn to handle small apparatus well.

Commentary

51. Most children are likely to meet the learning goals for this area of learning. In the outside area children use the large apparatus well. They use wheeled toys and ride tricycles safely, without bumping into anyone else. The staff offer good support, encouraging children to play safely and move with good control and co-ordination. Because of the good teaching, children confidently use construction toys, making different vehicles as part of their play. They have well-designed physical education lessons, including dance. These ensure that all children enjoy activities and achieve well.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff provide a good range of opportunities for children to use their imagination in art, music, role-play and stories.

Commentary

52. Teaching and learning are good and children achieve well. They are in line to attain the expected goals by the end of the reception year. Nursery children enjoy dressing up and taking on different roles. As part of the topic on animals, they independently made a bus out of chairs to go off to the zoo for the day. Staff intervene effectively in children's play to encourage positive interactions. Nursery staff provide a very good range of interesting art and craft activities. The children are encouraged to choose their own art resources from a well-organised, accessible range. Reception staff share the same topic, building successfully on the good nursery provision. Their role play area is well developed as a 'rain forest jungle'. Children are proud of their creative efforts and share their work confidently with adults. Attractive, colourful displays of children's art work indicate good achievement.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

The quality of provision is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' writing is inhibited by weak spoken vocabulary.
- Marking in Year 6 gives pupils a clear picture of what to do to improve.
- Analysis of data is not thorough enough to see emerging patterns.

Commentary

53. Standards in Year 2 are below national expectations. This is because most pupils are working at the level expected for their age, although too few are working at higher levels. This attainment reflects last year's national test scores, which were below average. The overall performance of boys in the reading and writing tests has been better than that of girls. Little difference was noted during the inspection.
54. Pupils' achievement in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory. They entered Year 1 with language skills that were below national expectations. By the end of Year 2, standards in speaking and listening, reading and writing remain below those expected for pupils of that age. All pupils respond positively to their friends or their teacher, but many find it difficult to concentrate for longer than 15 minutes. Higher attaining pupils speak clearly, often in complete sentences. They recall detail, for instance, of a book they have read. Average and lower attaining pupils are much weaker than this, so do not use full sentences often enough. When talking about a book they know they recall only the major points, usually using the pictures as a clue. This has a negative impact on their ability to write stories. Higher attaining pupils read accurately and confidently, but lower attainers struggle with simple texts. They find it difficult to read unknown words because they do not use their knowledge of letter sounds well enough to help them. Whilst higher and average attaining pupils write with improving vocabulary and imagination, the work of lower attaining pupils is weak. Their letters are sometimes ill-formed and their use of punctuation is inconsistent. The style of writing taught in handwriting sessions does not yet regularly appear in most pupils' other written work.
55. Standards by the end of Year 6 are average. This is lower than last year's exceptional test scores because there are fewer pupils in this group capable of reaching higher levels. Over five years, standards have been rising steadily, except in 2002. There is little difference between the attainment of boys and girls when compared to their respective national averages.
56. In Year 6, pupils' speaking and listening skills are average. Most pupils listen attentively and speak confidently, but lower attaining pupils are less confident and clear. Reading standards at the end of Year 6 match those expected for pupils of that age. Most have positive attitudes to reading and find information and meaning confidently. They read clearly and are starting to use intonation to make the story more interesting for the listener. Pupils' writing is in line with national expectations. Higher attaining pupils write imaginatively using a wide vocabulary and different styles. Average and lower attaining pupils write less well. Their spelling is sometimes weak, especially in other subjects like science, and their handwriting style is occasionally difficult to read.
57. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. National test data indicate that these pupils joined Year 3 with broadly average skills. Teachers have built steadily on these skills, extending the higher attainers, by using the national guidelines adequately.
58. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress towards the targets set for them in their individual education plans. Teachers generally plan work that challenges their abilities. Teachers and their assistants give them sound support. The few pupils from ethnic

minority groups, including Traveller pupils and those for whom English is an additional language, achieve as well as their classmates.

59. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Pupils quickly learn what is expected of them because teachers consistently follow the school's behaviour management guidelines. For instance, the challenging behaviour of some pupils in classes containing more boys than girls was handled well by the class teachers. In Year 6, a mountain suit was used well to help lower attaining pupils write a descriptive pamphlet. Pupils in Year 2 learned to skim a text for key words because the task was well explained. Because the teaching of spelling has not yet achieved the balance between 'families' of letter sounds and words related to current topics, pupils too often spell words incorrectly in topic work and science. Teachers' marking throughout the school is satisfactory and gives praise where it is due. Only the marking in Year 6, which was very high quality, consistently gave pupils pointers for improvement.
60. Leadership is satisfactory. The co-ordinator sets a good, positive example for colleagues. Management is unsatisfactory. Inadequacies in assessment procedures, particularly analysis of data from the national tests, have prevented the co-ordinator from seeking patterns in pupils' results or setting individual pupil targets on a year-on-year basis. Some satisfactory work has gone into establishing pupils' targets for writing and assessment of pupils' spelling ability, but much remains to be done.
61. The subject has not improved enough since the last inspection. Standards in Year 6 have at least been maintained, but standards in Year 2 are now lower.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

62. Opportunities for pupils to use their literacy skills in other subjects are satisfactory and improving. There are many times when the pupils use their skills, but these are not yet planned as an extension to literacy lessons. For example, pupils wrote an account of a trip to Tatton Park as part of a history topic. They later used the computer to write out and edit their work. Older pupils comfortably used the Internet to research information on a geography topic. Younger pupils learned to write postcards and address them correctly. Year 2 pupils combined literacy with design and technology skills to make exciting books, using levers that allow the characters to move.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are average by end of Year 6, but below average at the end of Year 2.
- The quality of both teaching and learning is satisfactory.
- There is too little monitoring and evaluation of the subject.
- Assessment is inconsistent and unsatisfactory.

Commentary

63. Standards in Year 2 are below the national average. The judgement on standards is lower than last year's national tests results because of the differing abilities of the groups of pupils.
64. Pupils' achievement in Years 1 and 2 is now satisfactory. When pupils joined Year 1, their standards were in line with those found nationally in all areas of the curriculum. Considerable staff changes in Years 1 and 2 have had a negative impact on pupils' attainment, resulting in the present below-average attainment. In most lessons seen, teachers set tasks that matched pupils' ability well. Satisfactory teaching with some good features enables them now to move on and make satisfactory progress
65. Standards in Year 6 are similar to the national average. National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 last year showed that pupils' performance matched the national average for all schools

and when compared with similar schools. In Year 2, girls did not perform as well as boys in the tests but in Year 6 there was little difference between the three-year average scores. Despite the considerably larger number of boys than girls in a few classes, no significant difference in performance was noted during the inspection.

66. Pupils' achievement in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory overall. They join Year 3 with standards which are lower than average. Pupils make more rapid progress in some classes than in others because teachers help them to become independent in their learning, sharing with them at the outset of the lesson their expectations. In most lessons seen tasks were appropriately matched to pupils' abilities, but this is not always reflected in their exercise books. In work seen in Years 1 and 2, work sheets have been used extensively for all groups of pupils with very little difference for those with difficulties in learning.
67. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. In some classes pupils are assisted well by learning support assistants, however there are very few pupils who have targets set for them in mathematics and there are no intervention programmes in place to support lower attaining pupils.
68. Teaching is satisfactory with some good features. In most lessons, day-to-day planning is suitably detailed and shows clearly how each ability group will be supported. For example, in a Year 5 lesson all pupils made good progress in calculating angles. The teacher worked closely with the lower attaining group, whilst ensuring that high attainers had suitably challenging activities. Lessons were very good when teachers shared with pupils what it is that they were to learn, explained the concepts clearly and matched tasks very well to pupils' abilities. The focus on mental calculation at the start of lessons is well organised, effective and enables pupils to make good progress. Teachers manage pupils well, helping them to remain on task and develop good working habits. Pupils' work is regularly marked and some teachers use rewards, but the quality of marking varies considerably. Only rarely do teachers indicate how work could be improved. Homework is set by some teachers and a policy is in place but practice is inconsistent across the school. Very few teachers set individual or group targets in mathematics and the effectiveness of assessment varies significantly. A few teachers assess pupils' attainment and progress thoroughly and regularly but seldom act on their findings. Overall, assessment is unsatisfactory.
69. Leadership is satisfactory, but there are weaknesses in the management of the subject. The co-ordinator was appointed only two months ago and since this time has placed an emphasis on improving standards in mathematics, with staff training on relevant issues such as the use of assessment and marking. Teaching and learning are at very early stages of monitoring and evaluation and there is very little tracking of pupils' progress or attainment in the subject. Too little use is made of information and communication technology (ICT) to support teaching and learning in mathematics.

Mathematics across the curriculum

70. Pupils do not make enough use of their mathematical skills in other subjects. Where they are used, this tends to be incidental rather than being specifically planned by teachers. Pupils use their measuring skills occasionally in science and geography, but there is little evidence of mathematics in other subjects of the curriculum.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged.
- There is an increasing emphasis on scientific investigation skills.
- The subject co-ordinator has a good understanding of what needs to be improved, including scientific investigation skills, and this is beginning to have a positive impact on provision.
- Teachers do not have enough useful information about pupils' progress for use in planning work.

Commentary

71. Standards are below average at the end of Year 2 and at the end of Year 6. Pupils' attainment when they started school was below average, so this represents satisfactory achievement. In 2003, teachers judged that Year 2 pupils' performance was well below average overall. However, a greater proportion of these pupils than found nationally reached a higher level than expected. This year, more pupils are likely to reach the expected levels because of a greater emphasis on teaching scientific investigation skills. Last year the performance of Year 6 pupils in the National Curriculum tests was below the national average and below that for similar schools. Inspection findings confirm that is still the case. Although achievement is satisfactory, not enough pupils are reaching the higher level to improve the school's performance figures. Test results suggest that boys have performed better than girls over the last three years, but no significant differences were noted during the inspection. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to their classmates.
72. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and leads to satisfactory learning. There are a number of good features in the teaching. Teachers plan lessons that place strong emphasis on learning scientific investigation skills. This helps pupils to learn not only those skills, but also scientific facts. In a satisfactory lesson for Year 5 pupils the teacher helped pupils to build on their knowledge and understanding of how to plan an investigation about the evaporation rates of different liquids. Through effective questioning and an insistence that pupils explain their answers, the teacher developed pupils' understanding of a fair test well. In this lesson the teacher asked pupils questions that matched their ability, for example asking one higher attaining pupil a question that linked evaporation to the movement of molecules. However, pupils' science exercise books show that teachers do not match pupils' work closely enough to what they already know. This stems in part from the lack of consistent procedures for finding out what individual pupils or groups of pupils have learned. This means there is not enough information to help teachers plan individual and series of lessons, so pupils, particularly higher attainers, are not sufficiently challenged. Recently, some teachers have given pupils targets for improvement, but these are mainly concerned with improving their presentation, rather than increasing knowledge and understanding. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well. In a good lesson, the temporary Year 1 teacher used praise and encouragement well and involved all pupils in the lesson. They stayed interested, listened well and made sensible suggestions about how a car might travel on different surfaces. Pupils enjoy science. Year 2 pupils work well together when rolling a ball to investigate forces. Sometimes, however, the planned activities do not help scientific learning. Year 6 pupils, for example, spent too much time colouring and cutting out pictures when finding out about identification keys. Year 5 pupils did not have enough chances to ask their own questions or to design and carry out their own investigations, which reduced their opportunities to learn scientific enquiry skills.
73. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Because of the school's recent period of uncertainty, the co-ordinator has not had enough time to monitor and evaluate teaching or to develop the subject formally. However, in recent months she has begun to examine pupils' work and initiate procedures for assessing pupils' knowledge of scientific facts. She has discovered that many pupils' scientific enquiry skills are weaker than they should be. There has not been enough improvement since the last inspection. At that time, standards at the end of Year 6 were average, but they are now below average. The report also noted that teaching did

not extend higher attaining pupils, which is still the case. However, pupils' attitudes have improved and their written work is usually tidy.

74. The work in exercise books shows that pupils cover the required curriculum and that they make satisfactory use of their literacy skills, for example, in recording and explaining their investigations. In the better lessons, teachers encourage pupils to listen and contribute their own ideas, insisting that pupils explain their answers. This helps to develop their speaking and listening skills, as well as their scientific understanding. Teachers do not provide enough activities where pupils develop their mathematical skills. There are some instances of pupils having drawn graphs or measured, for example, quantities of liquids. Pupils do not use ICT skills widely enough, for example in measuring light or sound levels during their investigations. The subject makes a satisfactory contribution to health education as pupils learn what constitutes a balanced diet and why exercise is good for us.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well.
- Because there has not been enough teaching, pupils in Years 3 to 6 have had too few opportunities to learn and practise a full range of skills.
- There are no assessment procedures.
- Accommodation and resources are good.
- There has not been enough improvement since the last inspection.

Commentary

75. By the end of Year 2, standards are similar to those expected in pupils of that age. However, standards for pupils at the end of Year 6 are below expectations. Pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 2, but their achievement is unsatisfactory in Years 3 to 6.
76. Teaching is unsatisfactory overall because teachers in Years 3 to 6 do not cover a wide enough range of the required skills. However, the teaching observed during the inspection was satisfactory, with some good features. In Years 1 and 2, pupils make good progress as they use ICT in a suitably wide range of purposes. In a good lesson, Year 1 and 2 pupils learned effectively how to find information on a CD-ROM. The teacher linked the lesson well to literacy work on using contents pages in non-fiction books. Pupils enjoyed looking at the pictures and listening to the information they found. In a Year 2 lesson, the teacher used an interactive whiteboard well when explaining how to modify text. Older pupils use the Internet confidently to find information about volcanoes and mountains. Pupils use word-processing programs to write stories and articles, sometimes including pictures and altering text. They do not, however, include other features such as animations or sound to enhance their presentation. Pupils have too little experience of using the technology to monitor events such as light or sound levels. The school has no consistent procedures for gauging pupils' progress, so teachers have insufficient information for planning activities to match pupils' prior attainment.
77. Whilst leadership has been satisfactory, management is unsatisfactory but improving. The co-ordinator has not had any opportunities to monitor teaching and learning. The previous uncertainty in the school's leadership and management meant that an initiative to introduce assessment procedures stalled before these could be introduced. The co-ordinator, who has a good understanding of what needs to be done to improve provision, has initiated corresponding procedures, including buying in technical and curriculum support from a specialist company. There is a useful poetry and information and communication technology club, in which pupils use desk-top publishing techniques to explore poetry and poetry writing. There is a good quality computer suite for pupils in Years 3 to 6, but this is underused. In Years 1 and 2, the computers are well deployed so that each class has enough computers for teaching and consolidating the required skills.

78. Improvement since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory. Standards at the end of Year 6 are now lower than they were at that time and planning for the use of ICT across the curriculum is less effective.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

79. Many teachers plan lessons that make good use of the Internet and other facilities for researching topics, for example, when researching geography topics. Year 6 pupils compare the effectiveness of using reference books with finding the required information on line. A few are aware that books are sometimes more reliable because they have gone through a publishing process. However, teachers do not consistently plan lessons that aid the teaching and learning of ICT in subjects such as mathematics and science.

HUMANITIES

80. It is not possible to make a judgement about the school's provision in humanities because the team could not evaluate the overall provision in history and geography. The team did not inspect religious education because this is a Voluntary Aided school.
81. Judgements on **history** and **geography** are based on an examination of teachers' planning and pupils' work, discussions with pupils and with teachers. Teachers' planning indicates that National Curriculum requirements are mostly met, through a satisfactory range of topics based on government-recommended guidelines.
82. Both subjects help pupils to learn about their own culture. Pupils have studied recent civilisations, for example the Elizabethans, as well as older cultures such as the Ancient Greeks. Pupils satisfactorily use skills learned in other subjects. In history, younger pupils used their felt-making skills to make bags with designs of the Great Fire of London on them. In geography, Year 6 pupils combine a study of mountain environments with English work on writing a leaflet to sell a mountain suit. Whilst doing so, pupils made good use of word-processing skills. Older pupils are encouraged to find out information on the Internet and bring it to school. Their topic on 'Britain since 1930' showed good use of such research.
83. A key weakness in humanities is that the school does not successfully plan topics for the mixed-age classes. In Years 1 and 2, the system whereby each class studies the same topics one year and changes them the next is working well since no pupil experiences the same topic twice. This system does not work as well in Years 3 to 6 because there is one class of both Year 4 and Year 5 pupils, as well as another class of Year 3 and Year 4 pupils. The school has firm plans to correct the imbalance in the new school year. It also intends to develop better assessment systems, which currently rely too heavily on teachers' memory and pupils' annual reports.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

84. The team was not able to make any overall judgements about teaching or provision in art and design, design and technology, music or physical education since it was not possible to observe enough lessons. Judgements are based on the small number of lessons seen, an examination of pupils' work, teachers' planning and discussions with pupils.
85. In **art and design**, pupils achieve satisfactorily and reach the standards expected by the end of Years 2 and 6. There are pleasing displays of pupils' work, which include a satisfactory range of media, such as chalk, paint and charcoal. Pupils learn about the work of artists from different times and cultures; for example, in Year 6 pupils have been working on landscapes in the style of Brueghel. However, Year 6 pupils were unable to recall using any other media over the last four years and considered that they spent too much time copying pictures. Art is taught as part of two year programme, which means that all the pupils in Years 3 to 6 are following the same topic. This is not helpful for those pupils in mixed-age classes. There are good links between

art and design, and ICT. The Internet is well used to research topics and all pupils use paint programs on the computer successfully to produce attractive patterns and designs. The imaginative use of the digital camera enhances the quality of teaching and learning.

86. The leadership of the subject is satisfactory. However, there are weaknesses in its management. Whilst the subject co-ordinator takes photographs of each of the topics, there are no assessment procedures for monitoring and evaluation of provision. The school benefits from artists from the community visiting the school. There is a spacious art room, but this was underused during the inspection.
87. In **design and technology**, pupils reach the expected standards by the end of Year 2, but it is not possible to make a judgement on standards at the end of Year 6. There has been too little improvement since the last inspection. Guidelines for teaching, based on those nationally recommended, have been introduced by the recently appointed co-ordinator but these are not used by some teachers. A good variety of work is displayed in the infant building. Years 1 and 2 pupils have carefully planned, made and evaluated a range of artefacts, using a good variety of materials. This quality of work has not been followed through to the same extent in Years 3 to 6. Design and technology teaching is restricted to one week each term. This has a negative impact on pupils' learning and achievement in the subject because pupils are unable to recall what they have done or the skills they have learned. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have designed and made models of chairs, but there is very little evidence of them evaluating products. There is only limited evidence of them exploring the properties of different textiles, wood, plastics or food products.
88. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory, as secure plans are in place to improve the subject. However, management is unsatisfactory. There are, for instance, no assessment procedures, nor any for monitoring or evaluating provision to identify more thoroughly the subject's strengths and weaknesses.
89. In **music**, singing sessions for Years 1 and 2 and for Years 3 to 6 were observed and all pupils were heard singing in assembly. Most pupils sing satisfactorily. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 take part confidently in singing practice. However, in singing practice for older pupils, Year 6 pupils show little confidence or enthusiasm. Younger pupils try hard to emulate the good lead provided by the teachers who lead the sessions. The curriculum is enriched by visits from musicians and a choir sings in church and in the town at Christmas.
90. In **physical education**, discussions and photographs show that pupils take part in a satisfactory range of activities. The school is fortunate in having a large hall dedicated to physical education and spacious, well maintained outdoor areas. Owing to economy measures, no swimming took place this year. However, pupils currently in Year 6 have taken part in swimming lessons when in Years 3 and 4 and so have learned swimming and water safety skills. The swimming programme is due to restart next school year. Physical education is enriched by a number of popular after-school activities, including football and netball clubs. Year 6 pupils take part in adventurous activities during their residential visit.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

91. Not enough teaching or work could be seen during the inspection to make a judgement about provision in this subject.
92. Although there is no formal programme of personal, social and health education, pupils learn about relevant topics in other lessons. For example, teachers ensure that pupils learn about healthy living and growth in science. The 'Health for Life' programme is well integrated into science lessons, where pupils learn about the effects of exercise and the importance of having a balanced diet. Religious education provides opportunities for pupils to learn about moral and social behaviour and discuss relationships. Circle time, an opportunity for discussing pupils'

thoughts and feelings in a relaxed and supportive environment, has recently been introduced, but its use is not yet consistent throughout the school.

93. Visitors to school usefully help to promote the subject. The school nurse comes in annually to talk to pupils in Year 6 about changes in their body. The pupils develop an understanding of social responsibility through their work in supporting charities.

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

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