

INSPECTION REPORT

ST JOSEPH'S RC INFANT SCHOOL

Upper Norwood, London

LEA area: Croydon

Unique reference number: 101803

Headteacher: Mrs Helen Thompson

Lead inspector: Mrs Janet Gill

Dates of inspection: 23rd - 25th September 2003

Inspection number: 257756

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

© Crown copyright 2003

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:	Infant
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	3 – 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	200
School address:	Crown Dale Upper Norwood London
Postcode:	SE19 3NX
Telephone number:	(0208) 670 2385
Fax number:	(0208) 670 0420
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Elaine Jones
Date of previous inspection:	1 st June 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St Joseph's RC Infant School is a diverse and multicultural Roman Catholic School in Croydon, near to Lambeth. Most of the 200 pupils live in the locality, many more from the local estates than at the time of the previous inspection. Children enter the Nursery with attainment that is below average, particularly in language development and social skills, where some children's skills are poorly developed. More pupils live in overcrowded homes and many more are from minority ethnic groups than is usual. There are 136 pupils from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds, of these 26 have support with learning to speak English. This is much higher than in most schools. This figure may increase during the term as new children are admitted into the Nursery. The most common languages spoken are Spanish, French and Portuguese. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs has risen since the previous inspection and is now around 30 per cent, which is above average. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is around average. There has been a trend towards high mobility recently because some families are being re-housed and a few families are returning or going to Ireland. The school was recently awarded the Basic Skills Award for its effective provision and achieving above average standards in English and mathematics.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
18706	Mrs Janet Gill	Lead inspector	English; Foundation Stage; English as an additional language (EAL)
8991	Mrs Pamela Goldsack	Lay inspector	
13754	Mrs Judy Morris	Team inspector	Science; Design and technology; Geography; History
14509	Mr Philip Mann	Team inspector	Mathematics; Information and communication technology (ICT); Art and design; Music; Physical education; Special educational needs (SEN)

The inspection contractor was:

Tribal PPI
Barley House
Oakfield Grove
Clifton
Bristol
BS8 2BN

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	4 - 6
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	7 - 11
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	11 - 16
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	17 - 18
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS	19 - 29
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	30

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school's effectiveness is good. The headteacher is a very effective leader and manager and strongly ensures that every child is fully included in all aspects of school life. The quality of education is now good. There is a very strong team commitment to maintain standards in reading, writing and mathematics, and, coupled with effective teaching and enthusiastic learning, standards have been consistently good since the previous inspection. In recognition, the school has gained the Basic Skills Award. The school gives **good** value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Well above average standards in reading and writing and above average in mathematics.
- The headteacher is a very good leader and manager who, with the staff and governors, promotes a very good ethos, based on Catholic principles and values.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language is very good. This helps these pupils make good progress and achieve well.
- The partnership with parents is very good and strongly contributes to their children's learning.
- The very high quality of pastoral care and support is a distinctive feature of the school.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very effective.
- Children have a very good start in the Nursery, which then carries through the rest of the school.
- Presentation, including neat handwriting, is not good enough in literacy and in other subjects.
- There are too few opportunities for pupils to use literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills in other subjects.
- There is too little emphasis on sharing learning intentions with pupils at the start and the end of lessons and showing pupils how they can improve through marking.

Effectiveness of the school since the previous inspection has been good. When the school was inspected in June 1998, it was found to have some notable strengths. These have been maintained and key issues tackled well. The quality of education required improvement. Teaching, the curriculum, assessment and provision for the youngest children have all improved. The governors are more aware of the strengths of the school and its priorities through its monitoring role.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
reading	A	A	A	A
writing	A	A	A	A
mathematics	B	B	B	B

Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average. Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals.

Pupils **achieve well** and reach standards that are well above average in reading and writing and above average in mathematics by the end of Year 2. When children enter the Nursery, attainment is generally **below average**, although in communication, language and literacy and social skills, it is sometimes poor. Children learn effectively and **achieve well**. By the end of Reception, children reach standards expected and a few achieve more highly. However, standards in communication, language and literacy are often below average. Very strong emphases on personal, social and emotional development ensure children achieve well and reach above average standards.

In Years 1 and 2, standards in reading, writing and mathematics are above average, with strengths in reading. Standards have improved in art and design, geography and history and are securely in line with those expected by the end of Year 2. Standards in music are above average and in singing are excellent, due to specialist teaching for all pupils. Pupils with special educational needs and those that speak English as an additional language achieve well because of very good focused support. In recent years, girls performed better than boys did. Because the school has implemented effective strategies, the gap between the performance of boys and girls is closing.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES, VALUES AND OTHER PERSONAL QUALITIES

Pupils' personal qualities are good. The headteacher and all staff **very effectively** promote the **development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.** Pupils' behave well, although there are a few boys who misbehave. However, lapses in behaviour are quickly corrected with little interruption in teaching. Pupils like school very much and have positive attitudes to learning. Attendance is satisfactory but below the national average. Despite the school's best efforts to discourage them, some parents continue to take family holidays during term time.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The **quality of education** provided by the school is **good. Teaching is good** throughout the school. In the Nursery, it is **very good.** Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language are taught well. Teaching assistants provide very good support. Tasks are pitched at the right levels so all pupils are challenged, which helps them to achieve well. Pupils concentrate, show interest and work hard. Teachers usually have high expectations of what pupils can achieve, but standards of presentation and handwriting are not always good enough.

The curriculum and assessment has improved and are now **good.** Particularly effective strategies ensure pupils are included in all aspects of school life very well. There is a very caring family environment where pupils are **very well** cared for, supported and guided by all staff. **Very positive** links with parents begin in the Nursery, where there are excellent induction procedures. These links significantly add to pupils' achievement and their positive attitudes towards learning and school life.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher is a very effective leader and manager. She is strongly committed to ensuring that pupils are included in all aspects of school life. Her evaluating and monitoring role ensures teaching is effective and pupils achieve well. The role of co-ordinators has improved and is good. However, monitoring of teaching and learning in the classroom is limited. The work of the governing body has improved and governors have a good strategic view of the school's strengths and priorities and monitor its effectiveness well.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have **very** favourable views of the school's work. They like the very high quality leadership and management and good teaching. They are happy to approach the school with any concerns and are pleased that their children make good progress. Pupils love coming to school **very** much and work hard in lessons. They are pleased that the school makes good use of their ideas.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Ensure pupils set out their work and present it neatly in all subjects and improve handwriting.
- Review the timetable to ensure the entitlement of all pupils to ICT is increased and computers are used more efficiently in the classrooms.
- Ensure that ICT is systematically planned across English, mathematics and science.

These other areas should also be considered in the action plan drawn up by the governors.

- Extend pupils' literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum.
- Ensure teachers share learning intentions with pupils at the start of lessons and revisit them at the end, and indicate how pupils can improve through marking.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Children enter the Nursery with attainment that is below average, particularly in language development and social skills, where some children's skills are poorly developed. Achievement in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 is **good**. By the time pupils leave the school in Year 2, they achieve above average standards. There are no significant differences between the performance of girls and boys and that of pupils from minority ethnic groups or who speak English as an additional language. Standards in reading and writing are **well above average** and in mathematics standards are **above average**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well in all areas of learning and by the end of Reception their overall attainment is in line with that expected for children of their age.
- Pupils, including those with special educational needs and whose home language is not English, achieve well throughout the school.
- Standards have been consistently high in reading and writing for the last four years.
- In mathematics, standards have been above average for the last three years.
- Pupils achieve standards that are generally above average in science.
- Standards in art and design and geography have improved since the previous inspection.
- Attainment is now good in music and the standard of singing is excellent.
- Presentation and handwriting in all subjects is not good enough.

Foundation Stage

Standards at the end of the Foundation Stage

Standards in relation to the early learning goals by the end of Reception in:	
Personal, social and emotional development	3
Communication, language and literacy	5
Mathematical development	4
Knowledge and understanding of the world	4
Physical development	4
Creative development	4

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

Commentary

1. Throughout the Foundation Stage, there is a very strong emphasis on communication, language and literacy by all staff. This helps children achieve well. Some children whose home language is not English make particularly good progress and within days of being in the Nursery are making themselves understood and are able to communicate with staff. This is due to the very effective interaction of the experienced staff. Teachers and teaching assistants continue the good work in Reception with good results. By the end of the year, many children are likely to attain the early learning goals, but some will not. Teaching and learning is very good throughout the Foundation Stage in personal, social and emotional development and based on Catholic aims, where all are valued and care and consideration are paramount. Staff have very high expectations of behaviour and attitudes to work. This

helps children achieve very well and many are likely to exceed the early learning goals by the end of Reception. In the other areas of learning children make good progress and are likely to achieve standards expected for their age.

Key Stage 1

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2002

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	93 (94)	84 (84)
writing	93 (92)	86 (86)
mathematics	95 (94)	90 (91)

There were 60 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. The school has maintained its above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics for a number of years. In the 2002 National Curriculum tests, pupils gained well above average standards in reading and writing when compared against pupils nationally and against those in similar schools. In mathematics, they achieved above average standards both nationally and against similar schools. In all subjects, there is a significant proportion of pupils who gain the higher Level 3, which indicates that the higher attaining pupils are challenged well.
3. Good systems to track pupils' performance are in place and National Curriculum test data is analysed to identify where pupils had difficulties. In addition, the school has good systems to track and analyse the results of pupils by gender and ethnicity and whether they speak English as an additional language. This information is effectively incorporated into planning and intervention strategies and support programmes put in place. There are no differences in the attainment of pupils from minority ethnic groups to that of other pupils in the school because they have well-focused support, to ensure they acquire proficiency in speaking English. The performance of boys has been below that of girls in the past but with good intervention strategies the gap has narrowed, which inspection evidence confirmed.
4. Achievement is good throughout the school, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils achieve above the national average and exceed predictions on entry. Pupils do particularly well in reading, due to a strong emphasis that effectively involves parents as partners in the reading process. Parents are trained to hear their children read at home. In addition, a good number come into the morning sessions to hear reading in the classroom. These have proved very successful and strongly contribute to the high standards in reading and the pupils' love of books.
5. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies provide good support for the teachers. Basic skills are generally taught effectively and help pupils achieve well. However, opportunities are sometimes missed for pupils to use the good skills that they have learnt in literacy and numeracy in other subjects. The scrutiny of work that pupils had completed previously showed that pupils did not take enough care of their presentation, including setting out work in mathematics, and handwriting was not neat enough.
6. Standards are average in most of the foundation subjects. This is an improvement since the previous inspection where standards were unsatisfactory in art and design and geography. Pupils achieve well in both subjects because the school has responded well to the weaknesses and has fully implemented schemes of work to ensure coverage and the development of skills. Standards in music are above average and the standard of singing is excellent. This is because all pupils benefit from specialist music teaching, which they thoroughly enjoy and achieve very well. They sing with confidence and develop their creativity by interpreting the music through their own choice of movements and gesture.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities are **good**, with significant strengths in pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are well-behaved, hard working and flourish in the supportive, stimulating environment that the school provides. Excellent racial harmony contributes significantly to the **very good** relationships found within the school. The school provides an atmosphere that will not tolerate bullying, sexism or racism. This is because respect for others is implicit through the Catholic faith and pupils are taught about other faiths and cultures. Pupils' confidence is extended because they are sure that their efforts and ideas are valued. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is **very good**. Personal development is central to the ethos of the school and it is promoted with great care and understanding for all pupils, including those with special educational needs.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the Foundation Stage¹ have settled quickly and happily take part in a wide range of activities. They make very good progress in personal, social and emotional development.
- Pupils like school very much and work hard in lessons to achieve their best.
- The school's approach to discipline is positive and successful. Pupils are praised and reinforced throughout the day and this adds to their confidence. In general, any lapses in behaviour are quickly corrected with little interruption to teaching.
- Pupils arrive promptly each morning and the schools' ongoing efforts to encourage punctuality are successful.
- Not all members of staff are as skilful in behaviour management as their colleagues. As a result, a few boys tend to misbehave when in their care.
- Attendance is satisfactory but below the national average. Despite the school's best efforts to discourage them, some parents continue to take family holidays during term time.
- The joy of singing in assemblies creates a spiritual atmosphere.
- A very clear ethos and high moral principles reinforce the importance of respecting one another.
- Pupils are morally aware of and are involved in formulating class rules.
- Teachers and other staff act as very good role models for pupils.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data:	6.8
National data:	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data:	0.0
National data:	0.5

¹ Foundation Stage – includes children from three-years-old to the end of Reception classes. The curriculum is set out under six areas of learning, which leads to the National Curriculum when children enter Year 1.

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	67	0	0
White – Irish	18	0	0
White – any other White background	34	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	6	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	4	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	15	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	5	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	22	0	0
Black or Black British – African	42	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	8	0	0

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

Commentary

7. Children in the Foundation Stage had only just joined the Nursery and Reception classes at the time of the inspection. However, they have already learnt the class routines well. They enter sensibly and leave their parents easily because very positive links have been established with the parents. Overall attainment on entry in personal, social and emotional development is below average, although a few children have poorly developed skills. Very good teaching and consistent and sensitive behaviour management means children make very good progress and achieve very well. Staff are very good role models, they show great care and consideration for the children and value and respect them. Children respond very well. They have settled quickly and are happy, they are learning effectively and achieving well in a very caring, stimulating environment.
8. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 continue to have good attitudes toward school and respond well to all that the school has to offer. They value the warm, friendly atmosphere within the school and work hard to meet the high standards set for them. Pupils arrive promptly each morning. Attendance is satisfactory but not as good as it was at the last inspection. There are no unauthorised absences and the most recent attendance figures reflect a high level of illness earlier in the year and family holidays. The school takes every opportunity to remind parents about the importance of regular attendance but, despite their efforts, some parents continue to travel during term time. Teaching assistants provide the necessary support to help pupils catch up with their classmates when they return from extended holidays, although fewer parents now take their children on long holidays.
9. There is a shared commitment among teaching staff and parents regarding high expectations of behaviour. The school's positive approach to discipline is successful and pupils work productively in an atmosphere free of bullying, intimidating behaviour and racism. Self-discipline does not come easily to a few boys and there are instances where they misbehave in the mistaken notion that they can get away with it. The headteacher plays a leading role in ensuring that high standards are consistent and will support staff members as necessary. The school makes good use of ideas that originate from the pupils. They are proud that they contributed to the design of the playground fixtures and the formation of the choir.

10. The joy of singing in assemblies creates a spiritual atmosphere. Sensitive use of prayers and the opportunities to reflect on personal and other issues promote pupils' spiritual development very well. The school's ethos successfully encompasses every aspect of school life. It is a caring community within which mutual respect between adults and pupils contributes positively towards creating a learning environment where all pupils can succeed. The cultural traditions of the school community and of the world outside are celebrated through "special days", such as International Day, and very good use of visitors to the school. This significantly enhances provision in such subjects as geography and art and design.
11. To improve behaviour even further, the school needs to make sure all members of staff are as good at managing pupils as more experienced colleagues.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The **quality of education** provided by the school is **good**. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when the quality of education provided by the school required some improvement. The quality of teaching and learning is good, although in the Nursery, it is consistently **very good**. The curriculum has improved and is now **good** with very effective strategies for all pupils to be included in all aspects of school life. Through a very strong ethos, based on the Catholic faith, pupils are **very well** cared for, supported and guided in school by all staff. Links with parents and the community are **very good** and significantly add to pupils' achievement and their positive attitudes towards learning and school life.

Teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching and learning is **good**. The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection. A greater proportion of good teaching was observed, nearly three-quarters of all lessons throughout the school were good or better. In the Foundation Stage, lessons observed were all good in Reception and very good in the Nursery. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection where teaching was satisfactory. Good teaching helps pupils to learn effectively, including those with special educational needs and who speak English as an additional language.

Overall assessment is good. The school has responded well to the key issues raised from the last inspection and assessment practice has improved. A wide range of assessments is now in place to track pupils' progress and to identify achievement. These are used to inform planning and have had a positive effect in raising the quality of teaching and learning in the school.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 40 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0 (0%)	7 (17.5%)	22 (55%)	9 (22.5%)	2 (5%)	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.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching has improved which has had an impact on the standards pupils reach.
- The very high quality of teaching assistants contributes strongly to the achievements and inclusion of pupils in all aspects of the curriculum.
- The teaching of pupils with special educational needs and for pupils who speak English as an additional language is good. Provision is very good.
- Teaching in the Nursery is very good and in the Reception it is good.

- Consistency and quality of planning is good in Years 1 and 2. Work is well matched to pupils' prior ability.
- Very good teaching by the music specialist contributes to the very high standards in singing.
- Imaginative teaching in eurhythmics helps pupils to be creative in music and dance.
- Teachers do not plan the use of literacy, numeracy or ICT in other subjects sufficiently well.
- Teachers' expectations for neat presentation and handwriting are not high enough.
- Behaviour management is generally good although there are the rare occasions when pupils drift off task and do not behave as well as they should. This is when tasks are not matched well enough to ability or the rules for good behaviour have not been stressed enough.
- There are times when the teacher does not adequately focus on the learning objective in the review or lessons end abruptly leaving too little time for evaluation.

Assessment

- Consistent and effective practices are in place for assessing pupils' progress.
- Formal tests results are analysed effectively and the information used well to plan future work.
- Targets for literacy and numeracy are set termly but not shared enough with pupils in lessons.
- Assessment is used well to identify pupils with special educational needs.
- Marking of pupils' work is inconsistent and does not always help pupils to see how to improve.
- Procedures for assessing physical education and art and design have yet to be introduced.
- ICT systems are not yet in place to track pupils' achievement and progress through the school.

Commentary

12. Teaching and learning has been more rigorously monitored since the previous inspection, particularly by the headteacher and the (LEA)² attached inspector. This, coupled with good induction and training, has contributed to the overall good quality of teaching now evident in the school. The very effective deployment and quality of the teaching assistants' work makes a significant contribution to the progress that pupils make both socially and academically.
13. Teaching in Reception was previously satisfactory; it is now good and teaching assistants offer very good support to the children. Teaching in the Nursery is consistently very good with excellent teamwork between the staff. Children learn effectively and make good progress towards achieving the Early Learning goals. The staff are extremely skilled in promoting and extending children's communication skills. This is a notable feature of the work of the Nursery, which is essential as there are many children entering with poorly developed speech and language skills and also a higher than average number of children who speak English as an additional language.
14. One of the significant strengths of the school is that all pupils are fully included in all lessons, relationships are very positive and all pupils are valued regardless of differences. This is strongly promoted by the headteacher and the very effective teamwork between teachers, the nursery nurse and teaching assistants ensure this fundamental aim is met in lessons. Pupils who have special educational needs are taught very well which helps them to learn effectively and make good progress. Teachers and teaching assistants meet with the special needs co-ordinator to review / assess and plan the next steps in learning, so there is very good provision on a regular basis. Pupils for whom English is an additional language have equally very good support. Adults are very skilled in promoting language development in all aspects of the curriculum; this contributes to pupils becoming proficient in the use of English.

² LEA – local education authority

15. Planning has improved, it is more thorough and learning objectives are often identified. However, they are not always shared sufficiently often with pupils in the introduction of lessons nor are they referred to at the end. On occasions, lessons end too abruptly without evaluation or opportunities to reflect on their learning. This means that pupils are not always as aware of their progress in the lesson as they should. There was a very good example of a successful review of the lesson in Year 1 literacy. Pupils were thinking about words that described people, places and things - adjectives. With great excitement and anticipation from the pupils, the teacher took a toy monster out of a box. The teacher used very good questions to help pupils be imaginative in choosing suitable adjectives to describe the monster. This reinforced pupils' learning well.
16. Literacy and numeracy are taught across the curriculum satisfactorily, in subjects such as science, geography and history. Opportunities are sometimes missed, however, for pupils to use skills that are learnt in literacy and numeracy. In addition, teachers' expectations are not always high enough regarding the quality of presentation and handwriting is not always neat. In ICT, insufficient attention is given to improving pupils' skills through the use of computers in other areas of the curriculum. This is an area that the school is aware that needs to improve.
17. Results of formal tests and other ongoing assessments in English and mathematics are carefully analysed. They are used to identify weaknesses in provision and pupils' understanding of the work covered. The results are fed into planning and have contributed towards improving the quality of teaching and learning within the school and to raising attainment in these subjects. Each term, targets for literacy and numeracy are set and shared with both pupils and parents in order that pupils know what they have to do next to improve further. Ongoing assessments are used for science, history and geography. Pupils' achievements and progress in art and design and physical education are not identified because assessment is not yet in place for these subjects. Assessment of pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language is effective and contributes towards the good match of work. Marking of pupils' work is inconsistent and does not move pupils forward by identifying what they need to do next to improve.

The curriculum

The curriculum provided for all pupils in the school is good. The school has responded well to the key issues raised at the last inspection and curricular provision has improved. It is broad and balanced and fulfils its aim to meet the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs. The school is fully inclusive and all pupils, regardless of gender, ability or race, are very effectively included in all aspects of the curriculum. There are good links for pupils and staff with partner institutions.

There is a **good** match between and balance of teachers and the curriculum. A very good number of well-trained teaching assistants effectively support teachers and pupils. The quality of the accommodation, including the outside areas, is generally satisfactory; the outside area for the Reception children is still being developed. Resources are **good** and used well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All pupils of whatever ability or gender have very good access to all aspects of the curriculum.
- The curriculum is good in the Foundation Stage and for pupils in Years 1 and 2. All statutory requirements are met.
- All subjects now have a scheme of work which means teachers know what to teach and when.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs and whose home language is not English is very good.
- The provision for geography, history and art and design has improved.

- Personal, social and health education opportunities are good. Pupils are prepared well for the next stage of education.
- The school offers a good range of extra-curricular activities.
- The provision and use of literacy, mathematics and ICT are not planned systematically across other curriculum areas.
- The outside provision for Reception children is not as good as for Nursery children.

Commentary

18. Since the last inspection, the curriculum offered to all pupils has improved. This is because schemes of work for all subjects are now in place and ensure that skills, knowledge and understanding are taught progressively to pupils of all abilities. As a result, achievement is higher, particularly in geography, art and design and history. Planning in the Foundation Stage has improved it is now very good and based securely on the Early Learning Goals.
19. Personal and social development is good and ongoing and is an integral part of the ethos of the school. Health education is mainly linked to science and covers all aspects of keeping healthy as well as an awareness of the sensible use of medicines. The school has chosen not to directly teach sex education, in line with its Catholic traditions. But, by agreement with parents, teachers answer pupils' questions directly, should they arise, and then inform parents accordingly. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education. This is because there are very good links with the adjoining junior school and continuous liaison between staff and governors. The provision and use of literacy, mathematics and ICT are not systematically planned or extended across other curriculum areas. This restricts pupils' abilities to develop the knowledge and skills learned in these subjects, and to put them to good use in a meaningful way.
20. The curriculum provides some unusual support for pupils with special educational needs through additional music and movement sessions provided by the music specialist. The introduction of two music sessions each week for these pupils meets their creative needs well and enriches provision for them. In the classroom, teachers are careful in their planning to ensure that work for pupils with special educational needs is well matched to their abilities. In addition, very good support from teaching assistants helps pupils make good progress. The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) offers very effective small group and individual support during several literacy sessions in the week. She targets specific needs very skilfully, addressing the requirements of pupils' individual educational plan (IEP) well. Pupils who speak English as an additional language receive equally good support in small groups if they need it and effective day-to-day support in the classrooms from teaching assistants. Progress is monitored well against the levels of English language acquisition.
21. The school actively encourages all pupils to take part in the wide range of extra-curricular opportunities provided to extend their experiences. Pupils respond well to the opportunities available to them and participate in a variety of creative, environmental and sporting clubs. Art Week and Science and International Days, together with a good range of visits and visitors, further enrich the curriculum and cultural provision.
22. The very good support staff make a valuable contribution to raising pupils' achievements by supporting teachers and pupils within the classroom. The school grounds, including the woodland area, make a valuable addition to the "outside classroom". Provision of an ICT suite has increased the opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in the subject but at present it is not used enough. The school has tried very hard to address the issue regarding the creation of an outside area. However, the area that is used is some way from the classroom, which means time is taken up going back and forth to the classroom. A very high bank makes it impossible to have a convenient area leading directly from the classroom. The school is exploring all possibilities to enhance provision to ensure Reception children receive the same high quality provision as Nursery children.

Care, guidance and support

Arrangements for child protection and health and safety are **very good** and fully comply with statutory requirements. The very high quality of pastoral care is a distinctive feature of the school and reflects its Catholic ethos as detailed in its Mission Statement and Aims very well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very caring family environment where pupils feel at home and confident.
- Detailed risk assessment by governors and a pro-active approach to ensuring health and safety.
- Excellent induction for children in the Foundation Stage complemented by very good transitional links to the junior school.
- Pupils' views are highly regarded and their ideas often utilised.

Commentary

23. The school day runs very smoothly because the very good practices governors established in their policies are consistently followed. The governors are vigilant about ensuring health and safety and risk assessments are carried out regularly and related matters discussed at every meeting of the full governing body. An ample number of staff members are trained in first aid. Routines are adapted as required to make sure pupils' safety is paramount. For instance, when construction work was carried out at the junior school, additional staff accompanied the pupils to and from the dining hall. The headteacher holds responsibility for child protection and is supported in this role by the special educational needs co-ordinator. All members of staff are regularly updated about procedures in this area.
24. The induction programme to the Foundation Stage is excellent and highly valued by parents. There are well-established links with neighbouring playgroups and a home visit to children and their parents before they join the school. Daily arrivals and departures are well planned and make sure that the children's needs are fully met. The children get the most out of the school day because they begin each session in a secure and welcoming setting. As at the last inspection, parents are very pleased with the very good links to the adjacent junior school. There are shared activities between infants and juniors and staff members confer with each other throughout the year. Pupils benefit greatly from the smooth transition to Year 3 that results from the ongoing efforts of the school.
25. There are very well established systems of intervention, assessment and provision of targeted work planned in individual educational plans (IEPs) for pupils with special educational needs. This ensures pupils make good progress and achieve well. Regular reviews of pupils on the special educational needs register ensures a degree of mobility both onto and off the register. There are equally good systems in place for pupils with English as an additional language, which helps them to make good progress.
26. Pupils are very happy in school and talk openly with their teachers and teaching assistants about matters that are important to them. Recently, the headteacher led an assembly where pupils' thoughts on the Mission Statement were explored and compiled to make a large display in the hall. The governors' Ethos, Discipline and Relationships sub-committee underpins the very good and often discreet pastoral care. All aspects of school life are carefully monitored to ensure that pupils and their families are very well cared for. For example, the Catholic Children's Society will be engaged to provide support for pupils experiencing divorce or bereavement within their families.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The partnership between home and school continues to be **very good** and plays a significant role in supporting all pupils' attainment. The quality of information provided for parents is **very good** and they are kept fully informed about their children's progress and school life. Parents' views are sought and acted upon. The school regards parents as vital resources central to the education of their children.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Information for parents is extensive and fully meets requirements.
- Parents are surveyed at least annually and their views are carefully considered and acted upon.
- The school's welcoming atmosphere and the friendly manner of all members of staff encourage parents to take part in school life, which promotes very good parental involvement.
- Very good links have been established with the parishes served by the school, the local community, church and the junior school.
- Parents are active in their support for school life.
- Some parents continue to take family holidays during term time. This interrupts learning for their children and adds to the workload of the teaching staff.

Commentary

27. This popular and over-subscribed school enjoys the full confidence of its parents. The school works very hard to maintain its very good partnership with parents and this adds significantly to the attainment of the pupils. From the very start of their association with the school, parents receive very good information about all aspects of school life. The prospectus, governors' annual report to parents and the end of year reports all include the required information in parent-friendly and attractive formats. There is additional information about the curriculum pupils will be studying, weekly newsletters, and booklets on how parents can help support learning at home. Parents are encouraged to read with their children and value the school's successful reading programme.
28. Parents' views are surveyed at least annually and their ideas are acted upon. For example, there is a growing awareness about ICT in school and parents are now informed about the computer programs their children are working on. Pupils who do not have computers at home are given priority in the computer club. The breakfast club was introduced in response to parents' requests.
29. A number of parents support the school through the activities of the Parent Teacher Association and by volunteering to help in lessons and on school trips. Some bilingual parents assist the school by informally acting as translators for others who do not speak English. In order to make this provision even more effective, the school is taking a more formal approach to organising parents who can provide this valuable assistance. The latest booklet from the Nursery includes different languages.
30. There is good attendance among parents at the termly meetings to discuss pupils' progress. The school is aware of the many demands of family life and will make alternative arrangements so that all parents are able to meet with the class teacher each term. The 'open door' policy at the school is a welcoming feature that makes sure parents can discuss any concerns as they arise.
31. The school involves parents well in school reviews when pupils are on School Action Plus or have statements for their specific needs. There are good relationships with external agencies that offer good expertise and training to staff and links with the junior school, which greatly contributes to the care pupils receive within St Joseph's and when they transfer.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **good**. The contribution of the headteacher to the leadership and management of the school is **very good**. Leadership and management of the other key staff are **good overall**. The role of the governors has improved and their governance is now **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher is a very effective leader with vision and manages the school extremely well.
- Promotion of inclusion by the headteacher is excellent. It is paramount to the work of the school - all pupils and staff are highly valued and included effectively in all areas of school life.
- The headteacher is very skilled in enabling pupils to reach high standards through monitoring the school's performance and implementing effective strategies.
- The role of the governors has improved; they have effective strategies to monitor and support the work of the school. They are well aware of the school's strengths and future priorities.
- The management and leadership of early years, special educational needs and English as an additional language are very good and strongly contribute to the achievement of these pupils.
- The role of the co-ordinators has improved; however, not all have had opportunities to monitor teaching and learning in the classroom.

Commentary

32. Leadership and management are good. The headteacher is a very good leader and manager. She has a very clear vision of what the school must do to support pupils' academic and personal development and to help them to achieve their very best. Inclusion is paramount to her vision and she is extremely successful in taking staff with her in ensuring pupils are included in all aspects of school life. Because of this strong commitment, management and provision for pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language are very good. These pupils achieve well and are enabled to fully contribute to the school's academic and social success.
33. The school is well managed and as a result is oversubscribed. The headteacher is a very effective and efficient manager and has a very good awareness of the school's overall performance. The headteacher, senior management team, all staff and governors work together to evaluate the whole school improvement plan and set the strategic direction for the following year. Very good consultation that involves parents and pupils also contributes towards the school's overall direction.
34. The role of the co-ordinators has improved; for example, they monitor plans to ensure coverage and consistency between year groups. However, at the time of the inspection, new co-ordinators had just taken on English, mathematics and science, so it is too early to make a judgement about their management of the subjects. Monitoring of teaching and learning by co-ordinators in the classrooms is limited. However, the headteacher is exploring ways to rectify this shortcoming but there are financial implications.
35. The headteacher promotes very good teamwork and enables staff to work their very best for the pupils. This is evident in the very strong support from the governors and headteacher in ensuring that the teachers and pupils are supported effectively in their work by employing well-trained teaching assistants. To ensure funds are available to maintain the high staffing ratio, which is paramount to the school's success, a maintenance budget has been set rather than a developmental one. The school is actively engaged in contributing to the training of a variety of students. New staff benefit from effective induction that contributes to settling them into the school routines and quickly helps them to become part of the team.

Performance management is used effectively to encourage improvements in staff and give them opportunities to take on different responsibilities.

36. The role of the governors makes a good contribution to the overall effectiveness of the school. They have continued to strongly support the school and their strategic vision has improved. They recognise its significant strengths and have a strong commitment to maintain them. Governors are aware of the areas for development but are realistic about the present financial restraints and where their priorities lie, such as to maintain the high levels of staffing. This includes the decision to employ a specialist music teacher, which has been instrumental in the excellent standards of singing.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	616,461
Total expenditure	619,803
Expenditure per pupil	3,083

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	51,443
Balance carried forward to the next	48,103

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The very good start children have to their education is a significant strength of the school. A purpose-built Nursery has opened since the previous inspection. There was a key issue relating to the organisation, planning and lack of an outside area for Reception children. Since the appointment of the Early Years co-ordinator, there has been very good progress in tackling the key issue. She is a very effective leader and manages the team extremely well, whilst offering very good support and expertise. Induction procedures for children entering the Nursery are excellent and information gleaned on the home visits contributes to the good early records kept. Attainment on entry is generally below average, particularly in language development and social skills, where some children's skills are poorly developed.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **very good**. This helps children of all abilities and those who speak English as an additional language make good progress in gaining confidence, playing together, behaving well and showing a joy for learning. By the end of Reception, standards are likely to be above average in personal, social and emotional development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning is **very good** in this area of learning.
- There are high expectations of behaviour and attitudes to work and play from all staff.
- There is strong promotion of independence and children able to select own activities.
- Inclusion is paramount – all children are included in all aspects of the curriculum.

Commentary

Nursery

37. Children in the Nursery are very interested in their activities. They showed very good concentration and delight in many activities, developing very good relationships with the staff. Very good promotion of health and safety, such as prompting children to wash their hands before making sandwiches, helps them to be aware of self-hygiene. Children have very good support to learn to investigate and explore. For example, there was great excitement when an ant crawled over a log. With effective intervention by the teacher, who collected magnifiers from the classroom, the activity was superbly extended. Several children became involved and were delighted when they found a slug and some worms. They were encouraged to treat the living creatures with great respect, which they did. Very good promotion of good behaviour ensures children behave very well. They are taught to be respectful when saying their prayers and are silent when they need to be.

Reception

38. The very effective work to promote personal, social and emotional development is built on in the Reception classes. Children have greater opportunities to gain independence through better organisation in the classrooms and the outside area. Children are happy and settled and, through a good combination of teacher-directed and child-selected activities, they gain confidence and the ability to concentrate. They follow instructions well and are effectively encouraged to tidy away equipment. Children are given good opportunities to show curiosity and joy. For example, delight was shown when children saw that the butter and syrup had changed and had melted!

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **very good**. This helps all children, including those with speech and language delay and those that speak English as an additional language. All staff work very effectively and tirelessly to encourage children to communicate better. Children achieve well, a few very well, so by the end of Reception, some are likely to reach average standards overall in communication, language and literacy, but many will not.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very strong emphasis on language development by all staff helps children to communicate more effectively.
- Children are encouraged very sensitively to verbalise their thoughts.
- There is good promotion of basic skills of writing, reading and enjoyment of books.

Commentary

Nursery

39. The very strong emphasis on language development from all the staff contributes significantly to the very good start that children make in all areas of learning. Teaching is **very good**. A wide range of stimulating activities encourages children to develop their skills in all areas. For example, they use the telephone, saying 'ding, ding' as it rings and then 'write' down messages. The conversation is extended with prompts from the nursery nurse as she says 'what did mummy say' and 'don't forget to say goodbye'.

Reception

40. The effective work started in the Nursery is carried on in Reception, where teaching is **good**. Very effective support is given to children who speak English as an additional language and those with special educational needs, when they work in small groups. For example, children learn words/phrases such as 'in front' and 'next' very effectively with small models of animals and later when they sit down to 'ride in the bus'. In addition, the teaching assistants are very well trained to continue language development work in the classrooms and outside area.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**. Children achieve well. Many are likely to achieve the Early Learning goals in mathematical development by the end of Reception.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good - there are interesting activities where number, shape and measure are introduced and reinforced effectively by all staff.
- Good use of both the indoor and outdoor environment contributes to effective learning.

Commentary

Nursery

41. From the limited evidence from direct observations, it is clear that there is a good emphasis on mathematical language. As children play in the outside area, staff incorporate counting and identifying colours and shapes, as they effectively interact with the children. They discuss which way are you going when riding the tricycle and number the parking spaces to

encourage the children to match vehicle to numeral. Photographic evidence indicates good provision.

Reception

42. From recorded evidence of previous Reception work, it is clear that there are good opportunities to achieve well in all aspects of mathematical development. By the end of Reception, children are counting up to ten and often beyond, recognise two-dimensional shapes and colours and order objects by size. During the inspection, it is evident that the average and able children have already acquired a good understanding of number and shape. With very effective use of a puppet, children recognised numerals and help place them in order on the washing line for 'Fred'. Most recognised triangles, squares and circles and one higher attaining child mentioned that the circle didn't have any corners as the circle 'went round and round'. The teaching assistant effectively uses the outside area to help children paint sequences of shapes – this they do well because they are encouraged to repeat their pattern verbally as they print.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **good**. It has improved since the previous inspection; children are much more aware of their surroundings. Teaching is good overall with particular strengths in the Nursery. By the end of Reception, many children are likely to achieve the Early Learning goals.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision is good in all aspects of this area of learning.
- Good use is made of the outside areas and school grounds that encourage children to learn from direct observation and opportunities to investigate.

Commentary

Nursery

43. Extremely good use is made of the garden, where children explore in the log pile and earth to find creatures. Extending language and scientific concepts, with attention to investigation and exploration, is very good. Children show curiosity when they investigated a slug with a magnifier – 'where are its eyes', 'it's asleep'. Children are confident to ask questions and the teacher works effectively alongside to help them answer them. More children join the expedition and worms that are found are excitedly shown to the other staff. Children are very effectively taught to care for 'God's creatures' during the activity.

Reception

44. Good attention to observation and investigation is continued from the Nursery to the Reception. Children showed good attention as they searched for special leaves and conkers to take back to the classroom to sort. They use their listening skills as well as observation when they are effectively encouraged to listen for the birds and the sound of the wind in the trees. Children enjoy using the computers and are beginning to control the mouse well, which helps them put shapes in the correct place. There is generally good co-operation as they take turns to have a go on the computer. They concentrate well and are confident to let the teacher know how well they are achieving 'I am getting better, I can use the mouse to do this now'. From photographic evidence, children are more aware of their own past as they sequence photographs from when they were babies to the present day.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good** in the Nursery and satisfactory overall in Reception (see curriculum section in Part B). Teaching is good and by the end of Reception most children are likely to have achieved the early learning goals.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good opportunities for children to develop fine motor control.
- The use of the outside play area for Nursery children is very good but satisfactory for Reception children.

Commentary

Nursery

45. The outside area is used well to promote physical development. Children take turns to go on the wheeled vehicles and most steer them with increasing accuracy and awareness of others. They balance and begin to climb on the apparatus with confidence.

Reception

46. There is good use of a teaching assistant when small groups of children use hoops, quoits and skittles, which help develop their physical development. However, the area is too small for children to ride wheeled vehicles safely and climb on large apparatus. Fine motor skills are developed well during cooking activities, cutting and rolling dough, and handling pencils and paintbrushes.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**. Teaching is good; children enjoy singing, play co-operatively in role-play areas and gain confidence in using different media and tools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are encouraged to use a good range of media and explore, pattern, colour and shape.
- Children learn very effectively when they sing and play instruments with the music specialist.
- There is good promotion on role-play, although this could be extended further outside.

Commentary

Nursery

47. From photographic evidence, children have lots of opportunities to explore different materials, use tools to create pictures and models, engage in role-play and experience music activities. In the outside area, children are encouraged to 'go shopping'. They become absorbed in the activity. The staff are particularly effective in this work and this helps to develop children's imagination as well as reinforce their communication skills.

Reception

48. It is evident why singing is so good in the school. The children in Reception make a very good start in their lessons and achieve above average standards in singing. They behave extremely well and resist the temptation to play instruments before they are instructed. When playing, they confidently accompany the piano but do not necessarily keep to the beat.

Lessons are fun, children respond well and listen carefully. With very good support from teachers and teaching assistants, children are included in all aspects of the lesson and achieve well.

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good** in Years 1 and 2.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A very strong focus on reading with help from the parents contributes to high standards.
- Work is planned effectively and matched well to all pupils' needs.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and who speak English as an additional language receive very good support in the classroom from well-trained teaching assistants.
- The SENCO and EAL co-ordinators provide well-focused support to small groups of pupils.
- Standards of presentation and handwriting are not good enough in English and other subjects.
- Literacy is not used effectively enough across the curriculum.

Commentary

49. All pupils achieve well, regardless of gender or ethnicity. Standards are well above average in reading and above average in writing. Standards have improved since the previous inspection and remained consistently high in the national tests. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good, which ensures high standards. The school provides good opportunities for speaking and listening, such as in assembly. However, opportunities could be extended further to include more drama and role-play in the classroom. There was a particularly good opportunity for pupils in a Year 1 literacy lesson to work co-operatively in the 'baby clinic'. Pupils sensibly chose their roles and discussed the health of the visiting baby, using appropriate intonation and vocabulary. Year 2 pupils are confident performers and most are articulate. For example, they projected their voices well when they recited a poem from memory in assembly. During the preliminary meeting, parents were enthusiastic about the school performances and considered that they were of a high standard. From the evidence gathered, the inspectors would agree.
50. The school places a strong emphasis on enabling its pupils to be good readers. Each morning, the classes spend time reading with the teacher and teaching assistants, also parents, who willingly give up their time to help the pupils read. The session is very well organised and ensures that all pupils have several opportunities each week to read with adults; this produces very good results. Year 2 pupils are already reading at above average standards and have a very good knowledge how books work. The atmosphere during the sessions is very positive and a love of books is promoted. The pupils thoroughly enjoy sharing books and have good skills in recalling the plot, predicting what might happen next and use a good range of strategies to work out the text. The higher attaining and average pupils read fluently and understand the difference between fiction and non-fiction and the function of a glossary, index and the contents.
51. **Teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 is good.** Planning is based on the National Literacy Strategy and is effective and consistent between the two classes in each year. Work is usually well matched to pupils' prior ability. Very effective support is given to those that need it and higher attaining pupils are sufficiently well challenged, particularly by well- focused questioning during introductions and reviews at the end of lessons. Occasionally, pupils drift off task. This is when they have difficulty reading a text and need more help. Teachers expect their pupils to work hard and complete a good amount of work; this they usually do.

52. The co-ordinator has recently taken over the management of the subject. She has made a good start to monitoring planning but, as yet, she has not had opportunities to monitor teaching and learning in the classroom. She is keen to work alongside her colleagues and observe work in English and find out more about analysing data. The headteacher has developed good systems to track pupils' progress and identify areas of the curriculum where there are difficulties. This helps to plan what pupils need to do next and is one of the keys to the school's success.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

53. There are satisfactory opportunities to use language and literacy skills across the curriculum, which is similar to the previous inspection. Some examples were seen in science when pupils labelled their diagrams and wrote out instructions for making a glove puppet in design and technology. The use of ICT to support literacy is still at an early stage and yet to be fully exploited. Teachers do not always have sufficiently high expectations regarding the presentation and quality of handwriting on some worksheets and in books. At times, work is untidy and letters not formed or joined correctly, which does not contribute to the learning process in English and other subjects.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good** throughout the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Effective subject management and intervention is raising standards of achievement, especially for boys.
- Good planning focuses on the needs of all children.
- High attaining pupils are challenged well.
- Pupils' use of mathematics in other subjects is not systematically planned.
- ICT is not used effectively to support learning in mathematics.

Commentary

54. All pupils achieve well and standards have remained consistently above average since the previous report. The quality of teaching and learning is now good and this has raised the attainment of all children. This is an improvement since the last inspection, where teaching was judged to be satisfactory. Pupils now make good progress through the school, especially in Year 2.
55. **The quality of teaching and learning is good.** Teachers group pupils carefully to help ensure that work is pitched at the right level. Pupils work hard and take pride in their work, although generally the presentation of their work is untidy. Their confidence in early number facts helps them to tackle increasingly challenging mathematical tasks and the establishing of the Nursery has enabled pupils to make a better start in the development of their number skills. In Year 2, pupils are able to write four number sentences using both addition and subtraction symbols when given three numbers. They develop skills enabling them to understand that $6+6=12$ and that this is the same as $2 \times 6=12$. They cover the full programme of study but more time needs to be spent on shape, space and measures. The school is gradually building up software resources to support learning in other subjects but there is an under use of ICT to support learning in mathematics.
56. Good teaching is characterised by the fast pace of introductions, clearly explained instructions and high expectations of work. Pupils have only limited opportunities to reflect on their learning and the final part of lessons could be devoted more to shared evaluations and discussions of what they have learned.

57. The present co-ordinator has only been in post for a very short time. Leadership and management by the previous mathematics co-ordinator reflect the good progress made since the previous inspection. Through careful development planning and well-managed intervention, the school has targeted pupils of particular abilities and helped to raise standards. The use of their assessment system provides useful information concerning particular areas of weakness and enables pupils to work towards targets and to be aware of how they can improve.

Mathematics across the curriculum

58. Opportunities to use mathematical skills, knowledge and understanding are not yet planned systematically into other lessons. There have been some opportunities, such as in geography, where a traffic count was illustrated as a graph, and in science, where growing beans were measured to record their rate of growth. Planning is not rigorous enough to ensure pupils are offered sufficient opportunities to develop their numeracy skills within other subjects.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good** throughout the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve standards that are generally above average.
- All pupils achieve well and make good progress.
- Pupils enjoy the subject.
- There is good curricular provision in science. All pupils experience all aspects of the curriculum.
- Good use is made of outside areas and Science Days reinforce pupils' learning effectively.
- Teachers do not sufficiently emphasise subject-specific vocabulary.
- Insufficient use is made of ICT, literacy and mathematics across the curriculum.

Commentary

59. Since the last inspection standards have been maintained. By the end of the academic year pupils in Year 2 reach standards that are generally above those expected nationally. All pupils achieve well in relation to their abilities and make good progress. This is because teachers know their pupils well and pupils of lower ability, including those pupils with special educational needs and also those who speak English as an additional language, are provided with very good support from teaching assistants.
60. **The quality of teaching and learning is good.** Teachers are enthusiastic, knowledgeable and well prepared for their lessons. Each year group plans together to ensure that pupils experience the same learning opportunities and cover the full programme of study. In Year 1, pupils are developing their understanding of the senses through practical work. They shared resources readily and work well together. The happy working atmosphere and good relationships in the classroom add to the enjoyment of the lesson and help to make learning effective. In Year 2, pupils investigate the effect of force on objects to make them go faster or change direction. Good support for pupils with special educational needs and an emphasis 'on being a scientist' helps pupils access the lesson well. All pupils are willing and pleased to talk about what they are doing and learning. They clearly enjoy the subject and generally present their work well. Sometimes lessons are too teacher-directed and opportunities for more able pupils to plan and carry out their own investigations are limited. Consequently, their investigative skills are not yet as firmly established as they might be. Subject-specific vocabulary needs to be more firmly reinforced so that pupils gain a clear understanding that

science is a way of working. Teachers make good use of the outdoor environment to enrich learning.

61. As the present co-ordinator has only been in post for a short time, it is too early to make a judgement about her leadership and management. From the evidence about the work of the previous co-ordinator, it is clear that the subject was led and managed well. Some interesting initiatives were introduced to enhance the subject, for example Science Days, which started two years ago, and taking part in a Birdwatch organised by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds. The planned Science Days excite and encourage pupils to succeed in their learning and contribute to the good curricula provision.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good progress has been made in provision since the last inspection through improved hardware and software.
- The quality of teachers' planning has improved, helped by teacher ICT training.
- Development planning for ICT is good.
- The existing timetable limits pupils' access to ICT.
- ICT is not systematically planned across English, mathematics and science.
- ICT is still not used to support pupils with special educational needs, as mentioned in the previous report.

Commentary

62. Since the last inspection, the school has made satisfactory progress in a number of areas. Teachers have undertaken additional training and this has enabled them to plan more effectively for ICT; better resources have been acquired, especially in the building of the computer suite; and the curriculum has been revised through the adoption of a scheme of work. Additionally, technical support is available on a weekly basis. These initiatives have all led to improved teaching and learning although, due to limited access, is unsatisfactory at present. The new suite offers ten computers and teachers have to plan carefully to enable fair access to the whole class. With present timetabling arrangements, pupils do not receive the recommended time allocation for ICT. This has an impact on their progress in the development of ICT capability, which means pupils' achievement is at present unsatisfactory.
63. The school has a satisfactory range of software and this helps pupils to develop skills satisfactorily in the communication aspect of ICT. Standards reached are average. For example, pupils in Year 2 were reordering sentences in a poem to support the development of their literacy skills and were able to manipulate the sentences with satisfactory confidence and print out their results. They used a graph plotting application to illustrate the different ways cars were travelling down a ramp in a science investigation. In Year 1, they were using a simple word processor to write questions as part of a history activity concerning their growth, such as "What did you wear as a baby?" They use graphics software to help them to illustrate their work, such as their portraits in an art and design activity.
64. The management and leadership of ICT are satisfactory. The headteacher and co-ordinator are aware that ICT needs to be integrated into all schemes of work and access should be improved. The development planning has given clear directions to improve the subject. The proposed system of assessment has not yet been established nor does it enable pupils to know how well they have done or what they should do to improve. The computers based in classrooms are underused and they do not help to redress the limited time pupils have to access ICT activities during each week.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

65. The school is aware of the necessity to use ICT more effectively across the curriculum as this issue has formed part of their ICT development plan. The school is building up useful portfolios of pupils' work and these illustrate how pupils are developing their ICT skills, knowledge and understanding. However, this evidence does not show enough use of ICT within English, mathematics and science, nor is there evidence that ICT is used to support learning for pupils with special educational needs.

HUMANITIES

Religious education

Religious education will be inspected separately by a Section 23 inspector next term. Geography was inspected in some depth but history was only sampled as it was not being taught during this half-term.

Geography

Provision for geography is **satisfactory** throughout Years 1 and 2.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have improved well.
- The quality of teachers' planning has improved.
- Use of literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum is limited.

Commentary

66. Since the last inspection, standards have improved and these are now in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2. Pupils now achieve satisfactorily in Years 1 and 2. This is because the school has responded well to the weaknesses identified at the last inspection and has implemented fully the scheme of work. In addition, the quality of teaching and learning are good and, with improved planning, pupils made good progress across the entire curriculum areas. During a Year 1 lesson, the teacher made good use of stories, such as "The Country Mouse". This helped pupils understand and enabled them to compare the differences between town and country living to good effect. Pupils listened intently, with interest and behaved well and all pupils were able to access the lesson well, due to good teaching assistant support. Mapping skills are developing appropriately as pupils plot their route to school and understand the use of symbols on simple maps. Pupils in Year 2 described the similarities and differences between two localities, the fictional Isle of Struay and Upper Norwood. Good questioning by the teacher and well-prepared resources enabled pupils to achieve well in the lesson observed as they described the physical features of the two contrasting localities.

History

Provision for history is **satisfactory**.

This subject was sampled because it was not possible to observe any lessons during the inspection. However, from scrutiny of work covered in the last academic year, it is evident that since the last inspection provision has improved. This is because the school has introduced a scheme of work, which ensures good coverage and satisfactory progression in pupils' learning. The lack of emphasis on pupils gaining an understanding of chronological order mentioned in the last report has now been addressed. Pupils engage in activities, such as completing a time-line identifying before and after Christ and time today, by placing events in order from dinosaurs to the Queen's Jubilee.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design and music were inspected in depth but design and technology and physical education were only sampled.

Art and design

Provision for art and design is **good** throughout the school, which is helping to raise standards.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has adopted a new scheme of work, which promotes good coverage and satisfactory progression.
- Art week helps to promote understanding and offers a range of opportunities for pupils to learn skills.
- Portfolios provide good evidence of progression and development of a range of skills.

Commentary

67. Standards in art and design have improved since the previous inspection and are now in line with national expectations and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Evidence from the portfolios shows that pupils are gaining in skills in observational drawing, in the exploration of line and tone and in the use of paint, pattern and printing. Progress in three-dimensional work was displayed by the paper plate masks produced by younger pupils and the clay masks, based on African examples from the Horniman Museum, made by Year 2 pupil. Pupils also make satisfactory progress in the use of fabrics in weaving and collage work. In the Year 2 lesson observed, pupils worked together well, sharing resources amicably. They all were able to use colours appropriately, gradually creating shades of colour, by appropriately darkening the paint.
68. Leadership and management of art and design are good. There is a good quantity of evidence which has been carefully put together in the portfolios. This indicates good teaching and learning, which is gradually pushing up standards. Good links are made with personal, social and health education (PSHE), where paintings of families, holidays and the seasons are displayed alongside written descriptions. There are good opportunities to promote pupils' cultural development through learning about the styles of artists, including those from other cultures, such as Aboriginal art.

Design and technology

Design and technology has not been reported in full as no lessons were observed in design and technology during the inspection. From available evidence, provision for design and technology is **satisfactory**. The scheme of work covers all the aspects of the curriculum. Pupils are provided with opportunities to design, make and evaluate a variety of products from a range of materials. Items such as puppets, seesaws and climbing frames form part of a Year 1 display that celebrates pupils' work. Satisfactory use of a variety of joining techniques using glue and sticky tape was made for the models. The use of construction equipment enables pupils to make houses and homes, and "God's House" indicates links with other curriculum areas. All pupils experience cooking/food technology and through discussion it is clear that they are proud of their achievements.

Music

Provision in music is **good** throughout the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The appointment of a music specialist has had a positive impact on standards of performance.
- Pupils with special educational needs benefit well from their regular music sessions.
- The eurhythmic classes enable pupils to attain well in listening and performing skills.

Commentary

69. The school has made good progress in the development of music since the previous inspection. Provision is now good. Pupils achieve well and attainment is above average and the standard of singing is excellent. Teaching and learning are good as evident in hymn practice and a class assembly. Pupils sang with great confidence, pleasing tone and with expression; in the assembly, they sang a number of songs from memory. The innovative use of music and movement sessions to support pupils with special educational needs is an unusual and successful feature of the school. These sessions enable trusting relationships to be developed between pupils and teaching assistants, most of whom work closely on a daily basis with these pupils. In addition, the introduction of eurhythmics sessions enables pupils to develop excellent listening and rhythmic skills. These sessions also enable pupils to develop their creativity by interpreting the music through their own choice of movements and gesture.
70. Pupils in Year 1 were able to use untuned percussion instruments in a controlled way to add sounds to a taped piece of music. The Ocean Drum intrigued the pupils as it sounded so like the waves, they were able to play with controlled dynamics and able to ensure soft accompaniment. High expectations of behaviour and respect for the instruments enabled good progress to be made.
71. Leadership and management of music are good. The headteacher and co-ordinator ensure all pupils are included very well in music through an innovative curriculum and teaching. The subject contributes very strongly to spiritual, social and cultural development, as pupils perform and enjoy sharing musical experiences.

Physical education

This subject was sampled and not part of the focus for the inspection. In addition, too little evidence was collected to report on physical education. From planning and schemes of work, it would appear that gymnastics and games are included in physical education lessons. Dance, with music, is skilfully promoted through eurythmics sessions.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	1
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3

Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	4
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
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	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2

The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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