

INSPECTION REPORT

ST MARIA GORETTI CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Ribbleton, Preston

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119608

Headteacher: Mr J Shaw

Lead inspector: Mr M Newell

Dates of inspection: 4th – 7th May 2004

Inspection number: 257788

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Nursery, Infant and Junior
School category: Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils: 3 - 11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 285

School address: Gammull Lane
Ribbleton
Preston
Lancashire

Postcode: PR2 6SJ

Telephone number: 01772 700052

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Father Sullivan

Date of previous inspection: May 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is situated in the outskirts of Preston in an area of great social disadvantage. The school gained Investors in People in 2001 and a Schools' Achievement Award in 2003. There are 311 pupils on roll in total, which includes 52 children who attend the nursery on a part-time basis. There are a slightly higher number of boys than girls. Most of the pupils live close to the school, although there are varying levels of pupil mobility from year to year and at times it is high. The vast majority of pupils are of white ethnic origin and the percentage of pupils whose first language is not English is very low and are fluent English speakers. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals stands at 34 per cent and this is above the national average. Other validated data shows that the ward that the school is situated in is amongst the bottom 5-25 per cent of wards nationally in terms of social deprivation. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs stands at about 17 per cent and this is broadly in line with the national average, although the percentage of pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Need is above the national average. Attainment when children start school is well below average and a significant minority of children start school with poor communication, language and social skills.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
10638	Mr M Newell	Lead inspector	Foundation Stage curriculum English as an additional language Information and communication technology Music Physical education
9224	Mr M Vineall	Lay inspector	
10228	Ms S Russam	Team inspector	Special educational needs English History Geography Personal, social, health education and citizenship
22556	Mr E Morgan	Team inspector	Mathematics Science Art and design Design and technology

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school provides a **satisfactory** quality of education and is an improving school under the good leadership of the headteacher. Pupils achieve well in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2 as do some pupils in Years 4 to 6. This is due to the good quality of teaching, although there are some weaknesses in teaching elsewhere in the school. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Good and at times very good teaching in the Foundation Stage, Years 1 and 2 and for many pupils in Years 4 to 6 enables pupils to achieve well.
- Teaching is not good enough for pupils in the Year 3 /4 class and for some pupils with special educational needs.
- The headteacher provides good leadership and has set a very accurate agenda for school improvement.
- Procedures for target setting and tracking pupils' progress, although improving rapidly, are not yet sharp enough.
- Teaching assistants make a significant contribution to the work of the school and to how well pupils learn.
- Although management is now good, some aspects of the management of special educational needs provision have been unsatisfactory over time.
- Relationships, the behaviour of pupils, and the involvement of pupils in the decision making processes of the school are generally good.
- Some pupils show a reluctance to take enough initiative and responsibility for their own learning.
- The school gives a high priority to the care and welfare of all pupils.
- Despite the best efforts of the school, attendance is well below the national average and punctuality is unsatisfactory.

Improvement has been satisfactory overall since the last inspection but has gained much greater momentum since the appointment of the present headteacher just over a year ago. Standards in information and communication technology have improved. The quality of teaching and assessment has got better, but the school recognises that there is still scope for these aspects to improve further if standards are to rise by the time that pupils leave school.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Overall, pupils achieve **satisfactorily**. Children achieve well in the Foundation Stage and pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 2. Achievement is satisfactory overall but more variable in Years 3 to 6. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 and some Year 4 pupils achieve well. At times pupils in the Year 3/4 class do not achieve well enough. The above table shows that on the basis of the 2003 National Curriculum tests for Year 6 pupils, attainment was below the national average in English and mathematics and well below the national average in science. When compared to similar schools, a more positive picture emerges with attainment above average in English and mathematics and below average in science. Inspection evidence shows that standards in English, mathematics and science are well below average. This reflects the fact that a high percentage of this group of pupils have special educational needs, a high percentage joined the school late in their educational lives and this group has, over time, been taught by a succession of temporary teachers. Evidence indicates that the school is on track to achieve its best ever National Curriculum test results in 2005. Inspection evidence also indicates that by the end of Year 2 standards are at an average level in reading, writing, speaking and listening, mathematics and science. This represents good progress and achievement for pupils from their starting point.

Attainment when children start at the school is well below the expected level and a significant minority of children have poor language, communication and social skills. All children get a good start to their educational lives in the Foundation Stage and although standards are below average in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world by the end of the reception year, it nevertheless shows good progress and achievement. Attainment in personal, social and emotional development, creative development and physical development is at an expected level by the end of the reception year and all children achieve well.

The provision made for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **satisfactory** overall with strengths in the provision made for pupils' moral development. Pupils' attitudes are satisfactory, although not enough pupils in Years 3 to 6 are prepared to take enough responsibility and initiative for their learning. Behaviour for the most part is good, particularly for the younger pupils in school. Attendance is unsatisfactory and well below the national average despite the school's hard and determined efforts to promote the importance of good attendance and punctuality.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is **satisfactory** with some good features. Teaching and learning are **satisfactory** overall and good in the Foundation Stage, Years 1 and 2 and for many pupils in Years 3 to 6. Teaching and learning for pupils in the Year 3/4 class and teacher input for pupils with special educational needs in the Year 1/2 withdrawal group are unsatisfactory. Assessment is satisfactory, but the use made of assessment data is not rigorous enough to have the biggest impact on helping to further raise standards. The curriculum is satisfactory overall and good for children in the Foundation Stage. The care provided for pupils is good and the provision made for pupils' involvement in the life of the school is good. Links with parents, the community and other schools are satisfactory and the school provides parents with good quality information about their child's progress and the life of the school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall leadership and management are **satisfactory**. The headteacher leads and manages the school well and has quickly established a very clear and accurate grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Leadership and management of subjects and other aspects of school life are satisfactory overall, but over time the management of support and provision for pupils with special educational needs have been unsatisfactory. Governance of the school is good.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Most parents are happy with the quality of education that the school provides and find the school to be caring and supportive of their child's welfare. Parents find staff approachable, but would welcome more opportunities for their suggestions and concerns to be taken on board. Pupils enjoy school and all that it has to offer. They feel that their views are listened to and acted upon and feel comfortable and confident about approaching any member of staff if they have any worries or concerns.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things that the school should do to improve standards and the quality of education are:

- Improve the quality of teaching for pupils in the Year 3 and 4 class and for some pupils with special educational needs who receive specialist teaching.
- Make more effective use of test and assessment data to help improve standards.
- Ensure that the much improved management of provision for pupils with special educational needs is maintained.
- Ensure that high expectations are consistently set and that pupils respond positively to opportunities for taking initiative and responsibility for their own learning.
- Continue to implement different strategies and procedures for improving attendance and punctuality.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Standards are **average** in the core subjects at the end of Year 2, but **well below average** by the end of Year 6. Children achieve **well** in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2. Achievement is more variable and **satisfactory** overall in Years 3 to 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children get off to a good start to their educational lives in the Foundation Stage.
- Achievement is good in Years 1 and 2.
- Older pupils in Years 3 to 6 achieve well, but achievement for some Year 3 and 4 pupils is unsatisfactory.
- The achievement of most pupils with special educational needs has improved significantly, although there remains a particular group who do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- Pupils across the school achieve well in art and design and some aspects of design and technology.

Commentary

FOUNDATION STAGE

1. Attainment levels when pupils start at school are well below average and there is a significant minority of children who have poor language, communication and social skills. Due to the good quality of teaching and curriculum provision all children make good progress in all areas of learning and achieve well. The low starting point of many children, however, means that by the end of the reception year attainment is below average in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. Attainment levels in personal, social and emotional development, creative development and physical development are in line with the nationally recommended early learning goals.

KEY STAGE 1

2. On the basis of the 2003 National Curriculum tests and teacher assessments for Year 2 pupils, attainment in reading and writing was in line with the national average and well below the national average in mathematics. The school's greater push on raising standards in English accounts for the lower attainment in mathematics. When compared to similar schools, attainment was well above average in writing, above average in reading and below average in mathematics. Teacher assessments in science and speaking and listening showed attainment to be below the national average. The school's trend of improvement has been above the national trend. Inspection findings confirm this continued upward trend as standards in reading, writing, speaking and listening, mathematics and science are at an average level. Pupils of all abilities are achieving well in these subjects. There is no significant evidence of differing levels of attainment between boys and girls.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2- average points score in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	15.5 (15.0)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	14.9 (13.6)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	14.8 (16.0)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 37 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

KEY STAGE 2

3. The picture that emerges at Key Stage 2 is a little more complex. On the basis of the 2003 National Curriculum tests for Year 6 pupils, attainment was below the national average in English and mathematics and well below the national average in science. When compared to similar schools on the basis of prior attainment, the picture is a little more positive with attainment being above average in English and mathematics and below average in science. The school's trend of improvement has over time been above the national trend. Inspection findings show that attainment in English, mathematics and science for the present Year 6 pupils is well below average. There are certain factors that account for this. Within this group there is a high percentage of pupils with special educational needs, there has been a high level of pupil mobility and over the last two years these pupils have been taught by a very high number of temporary teachers. Inspection evidence clearly indicates that standards are set to rise again in 2005 with the school on track to achieve its best ever results because of the above average standards of the present Year 5 pupils. The achievement overall is satisfactory in Years 3 to 6 but there is too much variability. The achievement of most Year 4, 5 and 6 pupils is good. Achievement for pupils in the straight Year 3 class is satisfactory and on occasions good. The achievement of pupils in the mixed age Year 3 and 4 class is unsatisfactory because of unsatisfactory teaching.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6- average points score in 2003.

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.7 (25.1)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	25.7 (24.6)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	26.7 (27.6)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 46 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

4. At the ages of seven and 11, standards in information and communication technology and art and design are at an average level and most pupils are achieving well as they are in some aspects of design and technology. Standards in physical education are average and achievement is satisfactory. On the basis of more limited evidence attainment in music is average and achievement is satisfactory. Aspects of pupils' historical and geographical knowledge and skills are weak.
5. The progress and achievement of pupils with special educational needs has over time been unsatisfactory, because support has not been targeted well enough to where the need was greatest. However, this situation has now improved significantly following the review of the role of the learning support assistants, instigated by the newly appointed headteacher, which has seen standards improve and better progress made by pupils

with individual education plans. Their achievement is now not significantly different to their peers, where they are taught in class. Pupils withdrawn from the Year 1 and 2 class for specialist teaching by a qualified teacher make too little progress and do not achieve well enough, because the quality of teaching is not as good as the teaching they receive from their class teacher. For pupils with statements, they achieve well in relation to their prior attainment and make good progress because of the good help learning support assistants provide. The achievement of higher-attaining pupils is satisfactory overall and stronger for the younger and older pupils in school.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Attitudes to school are **satisfactory** and behaviour is generally **good**. Attendance and punctuality are **unsatisfactory**. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **satisfactory** overall with good provision made for pupils' moral development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attendance rates are well below the national average and a significant minority of pupils arrive late for school.
- Relationships are good across the school and add positively to the ethos of the school.
- Behaviour overall is good and is enhanced by the good provision made for pupils' moral development.
- Although many pupils have positive attitudes to learning, too many pupils in Years 3 to 6 show a reluctance to take initiative or responsibility for their own learning.

Commentary

6. Overall, good relationships exist within the school, especially between staff and pupils. The pupils are lively and friendly and readily speak to visitors. This adds much to the positive learning environment of the school. However, whilst attitudes to school and work are good in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2 they are only satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. The younger pupils in school are well motivated and eagerly participate in the different learning activities that are on offer. Many of the pupils in Years 3 to 6 are keen to learn and participate enthusiastically in all that the school has to offer. However, too many pupils show an indifference to learning and do not readily see that they have a part to play in how well they achieve by taking a greater responsibility and initiative for their own learning.
7. The vast majority of pupils behave well both in class and around the school. Only occasionally do standards of behaviour drop below this level and this is usually as a result of the less than satisfactory management strategies used by teachers. The behaviour of the pupils in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2 is particularly good, with pupils showing a good level of self-discipline and maturity in their actions.

Exclusions

8. There have been a number of exclusions over the last 12 months, but exclusions are now decreasing due to the more rigorous and consistent implementation of the school's behaviour and discipline policies and to the good establishment of principles that enable pupils to distinguish right from wrong. Discussions with pupils indicate that bullying is not an issue. Pupils also say that should it occur, they feel confident it would be dealt with quickly and sensitively.

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	289	6	0
White - Irish	1	0	0
Mixed –White and Black African	7	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	2	0	0
Black or Black British Caribbean	2	0	0
Any other ethnic group	1	0	0
Parent preferred not to say	9	0	0

9. The provision made for pupils' personal development is satisfactory and is enhanced by the satisfactory provision made for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils' spiritual development is fostered through assemblies and through drawing the pupils' attention to the beauty of the natural world. Across the school, moral development is nurtured well and the pupils show a mature awareness of what is right and wrong and are aware of their responsibility to others. The provision made for pupils' social and cultural development is satisfactory overall, although enhancing pupils' understanding and awareness of the multicultural nature of society could be better.
10. The school has recently introduced a good range of initiatives to help improve attendance rates which at present are well below the national average. Unauthorised absence is well above the national average. First day checks, the awarding of attendance certificates and regular reminders to parents of the importance of good attendance have led to a small increase in the attendance rates. The school recognises the need to continue its drive to push up attendance rates and to tackle the lack of punctuality of some families. Too many pupils arrive late for school and prevent the prompt and efficient start of lessons which in turn adversely effects pupils' learning.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data:	6.5
National data:	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data:	1.4
National data:	0.4

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a **satisfactory** quality of education. Teaching and learning are **satisfactory**. Assessment is **satisfactory**. The curriculum is **satisfactory** with **satisfactory** opportunities for enriching pupils' learning outside of the formal curriculum. Accommodation and resources are **satisfactory**.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning are **satisfactory**. Assessment is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching in the Foundation Stage provides children with a good range of learning activities.
- Teaching in Years 1 and 2 and for many pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 challenges pupils' learning and enables them to achieve well.
- Teaching in Year 3 and 4 class lacks rigour and challenge and at times is unsatisfactory.
- Teaching assistants contribute significantly to how well pupils with special educational needs learn, although some other teaching for pupils with special educational needs is not good enough.
- Aspects of information and communication technology and some foundation subjects are taught well.
- Not enough opportunities are provided for the higher-attaining pupils in Years 3 to 6 to plan their own scientific investigations.

Commentary

11. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good. Improvement in teaching has been satisfactory since the last inspection. Whilst many of the strengths of teaching have been maintained and built upon there are weaknesses in teaching for some of the younger pupils in Key Stage 2 and for some pupils with special educational needs.
12. Teaching in the Foundation Stage enables children to achieve well. Activities are well planned and offer a vibrant array of learning opportunities across the different areas of learning. Children are provided with many opportunities to experiment, to investigate and to find things out for themselves. But equally, key communication and mathematical as well as creative skills are taught in a direct and systematic manner. Teaching assistants, nursery nurses and teachers work together very well and this teamwork impacts positively on children's learning. There are good procedures in place to ensure that what is taught in the nursery class is built on well when children move into the different reception classes. There is parity in the quality of teaching and learning in the different reception classes. Formal procedures for assessing children's attainment are satisfactory, but procedures for recording what children have achieved as they move around activities on a day-to-day basis are not rigorous enough to help further improve children's learning.
13. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 in the core subjects is good overall and at times very good. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills through well-planned discussions where open-ended questioning is used skilfully and effectively to enhance pupils' vocabulary. Reading skills are taught well and provide pupils with a good range of strategies to tackle unfamiliar words and phrases. Writing skills are taught equally well and provide pupils with the necessary tools to write for a variety of audiences and purposes. The emphasis that teaching has put on the development of pupils' investigative skills in mathematics and science has contributed to the rise in standards in these subjects. Pupils are expected to put their scientific and mathematical knowledge and skills to the test in challenging and demanding investigations and problem solving activities. Invariably pupils rise to the challenge and big advances are made in pupils' learning as a result.

14. The quality of teaching in the core subjects is more variable in Years 3 to 6 and is satisfactory overall. Teaching for many Year 4,5 and 6 pupils is good overall and at times very good. Teaching for the pupils in the Year 3 class is satisfactory overall and occasionally good. Teaching for the pupils in the mixed Year 3 and 4 class is unsatisfactory and at times poor. Where teaching is good or better in Years 3 to 6, tasks that are set are demanding and challenging and teachers expect a lot of pupils both in terms of the quality and quantity of work. Reading skills are often taught well and the well-structured and well-taught focused writing sessions that take place in most classes are helping to improve standards.
15. Teaching is good in mathematics when challenging and real-life problem solving activities are on offer and pupils have to put their numeracy skills to good use. This accelerates pupils' learning as it does when teachers rigorously and systematically build on pupils' previous learning. Teaching and learning in science is satisfactory with some good features, particularly for the older pupils. Scientific knowledge is taught well and more emphasis has been put on pupils learning through investigative activities. However, there are not enough opportunities for the higher-attaining pupils to accelerate their learning through planning and instigating their own investigations. Teaching in the Year 3 and 4 mixed class is unsatisfactory, because expectations are not high enough, lessons are not well structured. Teaching and learning are poor when these factors are combined with ineffective classroom management strategies and the disaffection displayed by a significant minority of pupils. The marking of pupils' work is variable across the school and is satisfactory overall. It is at its best when teachers state clearly how pupils are to improve. This good practice is not as consistent as it should be, as at times marking is cursory or makes over positive comments when the work does not warrant such praise.
16. Information and communication technology is taught well across the school because of the direct manner in which key skills are taught and pupils are then provided with quality learning experiences where these skills are put to relevant and meaningful use. Teaching in art and design and design and technology is satisfactory overall and has some strong features. Pupils are provided with opportunities to work with a wide range of media and are taught a good variety of artistic techniques and joining and fixing skills in design and technology. Pupils are expected to evaluate their work and teachers often put a good emphasis on creativity and individuality, rather than all the class producing uniformly finished products.
17. Teaching and learning for pupils with special educational needs varies and is satisfactory overall. In the vast majority of lessons, teaching assistants play an important and valued role in supporting and enhancing pupils' learning and help to ensure that pupils take a fully inclusive role in the curriculum. There are occasions when the skills and talents of teaching assistants are not capitalised on by the class teacher and this prevents pupils' learning from being better. Teaching in whole class lessons in Years 1 and 2 is good. It is satisfactory overall in Years 3 to 6 but good for the older pupils in this key stage. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 who are withdrawn for specialist teaching by a qualified teacher do not receive a satisfactory quality of teaching. Overall, pupils with statements receive good teacher and teacher assistant support which enriches their learning.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 37 lessons.

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0(0%)	2(5%)	28(76%)	4(11%)	2(5%)	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. Assessment is satisfactory. Good procedures are in place for assessing pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science. The headteacher and co-ordinators analyse test and assessment data in a satisfactory and increasingly rigorous manner to identify particular areas of strength or weakness. However, at present not enough use is being made of test and assessment data for setting challenging targets for individual pupils or groups of pupils or for tracking pupils' progress towards these targets. Good assessment procedures have been introduced for tracking pupils' progress in most foundation subjects but there has not been sufficient time for these to impact positively on pupils' learning, attainment or achievement.

The curriculum

The curriculum is **satisfactory** and provides a **satisfactory** range of activities outside the formal curriculum to enrich pupils' learning. Accommodation and resources are **satisfactory** overall and good in the Foundation Stage.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage provides a good and vibrant range of learning opportunities.
- The current provision for pupils with a Statement of Educational Need enables pupils to make good progress.
- Individual educational plans for pupils identified with special educational needs lack essential detail.
- Although good examples of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills being promoted in other areas of the curriculum are evident, this good practice is not consistent enough.
- Learning in information and communication technology is enhanced by the good quantity of resources.
- Book provision needs improving.

Commentary

19. The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets statutory requirements. Improvement in the quality of curriculum provision has been satisfactory since the time of the last inspection. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are embedded in school practice and there are good examples of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills being used well across the curriculum. However, these skills are not consistently developed in all classes. Increasingly good use is being made of computers to support pupils' learning in other areas of the curriculum. The curriculum provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good because it meets the needs of these children and recognises that they learn through practical and hands-on learning as well as more formal teaching

methods. The wide and vibrant range of learning experiences capture children's interest and as a result they make good progress.

20. The provision made for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall. The provision for pupils with a statement is good. The special educational needs co-ordinator has developed very good systems for recording pupils' progress and pupils are well supported in class. The provision made for higher-attaining pupils is satisfactory. The school has identified the need for better provision to be made for pupils of all abilities to enable them to develop as independent learners.
21. The school makes satisfactory provision for pupils' personal, social, health education and citizenship. Discussions in class enable pupils to raise issues that concern them and to express their views, feelings and opinions. The good relationships evident in most classes make a significant contribution to pupils' personal development. The science curriculum incorporates relevant aspects of health and sex education.
22. There are satisfactory arrangements for the enrichment of pupils learning outside the formal curriculum. Visitors to the school and visits, such as to a local sculpture park, raise pupils' interest and have a beneficial effect on pupils' own work. All pupils have opportunities to take part in extra-curricular sporting activities and this enhances pupils' social development.
23. The accommodation is spacious with adequate outdoor play facilities. There are adequate hard surfaces for play and good grassed areas adjacent to the school. Resources to support teaching and learning are satisfactory. The school is well resourced to meet the needs of the information and communication technology curriculum. There are not enough good quality books that appeal to boys who show a reluctance to read. Accommodation and resources for children in the Foundation Stage are good and add to the quality of learning.

Care, guidance and support

Pupils are cared for **well** and are provided with **satisfactory** levels of support and guidance. Pupils are provided with **good** opportunities to become involved in the decision-making processes of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Much good work is done to ensure a safe, secure and healthy school for all pupils.
- Good efforts are made to engage pupils in the running of the school and to consult them.
- Child protection procedures are most effective.
- Good procedures are in place to help children settle quickly into school.
- Although all staff know pupils very well, no formal records of pupils' personal development are maintained.

Commentary

24. Parents value and appreciate the caring nature of the school and recognise it as one which makes every effort to ensure that all its pupils are safe and secure during their time in school. The school recognises the importance of promoting a healthy life style for pupils and this is reflected in the school's desire to attain 'Healthy School' status. Issues such as health and safety are diligently addressed and involve governors, headteacher and staff, with good quality risk assessment procedures firmly established

as part of school life. The headteacher has put an increasingly significant emphasis on the importance of child protection procedures and ensured that these procedures are meticulously adhered to and implemented. All staff are fully aware of their responsibilities on this issue, with extra training planned in the near future.

25. Good work takes place to involve the pupils in the running and development of the school. A young, but already active, school council is enthusiastically received by both its members and other pupils. Pupils' ideas are already flowing both in and out and the council makes an important and valued contribution to decision making. The school has recently introduced "circle time" and this is providing another effective forum through which pupils' views are listened to, explored and valued. Discussions with pupils indicate that they feel that this is a school where their views are respected and acted upon.
26. The good relationships between staff and pupils add much to the personal development of pupils. Staff know individual pupils well and are always keen to recognise and celebrate the individuality of pupils. However, there are no formal procedures in place for monitoring pupils' personal development which at times restricts the school's ability to target well-informed guidance and support quickly enough to pupils experiencing personal or social problems. Good induction procedures are in place, which include home visits, good quality information and opportunities for parents to see the school at work before their child starts. These procedures help to ensure that children and parents quickly become accustomed to school routines and this impacts positively on children's learning. Arrangements for the transfer of pupils to the receiving high schools are satisfactory and are in the process of being improved through the setting up of a range of curriculum initiatives.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's partnership with parents is **satisfactory** and improving. Links with the community and other schools are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is putting much effort into developing stronger and more beneficial links with parents.
- Parents value the work of the school.
- More could be done in improving links with the local community and schools to enhance pupils' learning.

Commentary

27. Under the guidance of the recently appointed headteacher, the school is currently in the process of reviewing its relationship with parents and aims to engage many more closely in the work of their children and in school life. Parents already express positive attitudes towards the school and all it does for their children. An area where improvements may be seen is in the communications that are sent home. Good quality newsletters now keep parents well informed about school life and events. Regular class newsletters give good insights into the work the pupils are tackling. Pupils' reports, which already are of a good standard because they give parents a good idea as to what their child can and cannot do, are being redesigned to provide even more relevant information. Parents' evenings are now run more regularly with a very successful response and efforts have been made to develop more direct communication through "parent information evenings", "parents as educators" courses

and getting parents in to see assemblies and class activities. All these actions bode well for the building of a stronger partnership with parents. Unfortunately, not all parents are as supportive of their child's learning as they could be and a small but significant number of parents do not ensure that their children attend school regularly and on time. There is also the need to ensure that parents of pupils with special educational needs contribute to the drawing up of their child's individual education plan and its review.

28. Links with the local community are satisfactory. Links with the church are clearly an integral part of this school and of its life. The parish priests are seen daily around the school and "sacramental preparation" brings together not only pupils and church, but parents too. The range of visits and visitors is satisfactory, but more could be done to enhance the curriculum and widen pupils' experiences by greater use of local resources and engagement of local people and organisations.
29. The school's links with other schools and colleges are satisfactory. The school offers places for teaching and other students and this is especially valuable to the Foundation Stage. Links to the two key secondary schools served also provide opportunities for work experience students in the school. Links to primary schools are at present more restricted to other Catholic Schools which may exclude the school from some helpful initiatives that arise in formal and informal networks of a wider number of primary schools.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are **satisfactory** overall. The headteacher's leadership and management are **good**. Governance is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has set a very clear and accurate agenda for school improvement.
- The leadership and management skills of the headteacher are strong.
- Subject and some aspect leaders are rapidly beginning to make their mark.
- The management of special educational needs provision has improved significantly.
- Financial planning is good.
- Governors fulfil their duties well and have a good grasp of the school's strengths and areas for improvement.
- Staff new to the school are supported well.

Commentary

30. The headteacher has only been in post a relatively short time, but in that time he has quickly, accurately and astutely got to grips with the strengths of the school and the areas where improvement is needed to move the school forward. He has established a very clear educational vision and has been successful in moulding together a team of staff that are ready to go with him on driving up standards. He has always been prepared to make difficult management decisions if they are for the benefit of the pupils and the school. He has been successful in gaining the respect of parents, pupils and governors and most staff.
31. The school has not had a deputy headteacher for quite a considerable amount of time and the management of the school has been the responsibility of senior teachers alongside the headteacher. The role that these teachers play, together with other

subject and aspect leaders has been satisfactory, but is now improving at a significant rate. This is because the headteacher has empowered people to play a more significant and telling role in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning, provision and standards. The full impact is yet to be realised, but evidence indicates that the role of the senior management team and subject co-ordinators is proving to be far more effective than before in identifying strengths, tackling weaknesses and improving the achievement of pupils. Effective procedures are in place for analysing test and assessment data, but there is a greater need for the information to be used more rigorously for target setting purposes and for tracking the progress of different pupils. Improvement overall since the last inspection has been satisfactory, but has taken on a sharper edge since the appointment of the headteacher. However, the headteacher and his staff recognise that there is still work to be done in moving the school forward and evidence indicates that the school is now well placed to continue its upward spiral of improvement.

32. Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are satisfactory as it ensures that learning is consistently built on as children move through nursery and into the reception classes. Planning is monitored effectively to ensure that there is parity of teaching and learning in the different reception classes, but there is not enough direct monitoring, supporting and evaluating of teaching across the Foundation Stage. The current management of special needs provision is good, but the impact is only satisfactory. In the past, management was unsatisfactory because provision was not monitored well and support was not used effectively or sufficiently well targeted to where the need was greatest. Both these issues have been tackled well, although there is still scope for further improvement in the quality of individual education plans and the involvement of parents and pupils in setting and reviewing targets.
33. There are good procedures in place for the induction of new staff. Good procedures are also in place to ensure the continued professional development of all staff. Both teachers and support staff have opportunities to attend many training courses and the information gleaned from these courses is often disseminated well and used effectively to enhance the learning of pupils.
34. Governance of the school is good. Governors are very supportive of the school and have played a significant role in the recruitment of staff and in the management of the school. They show a readiness to make the right if not always the most popular decisions. A significant number of governors, particularly the chair of governors and the parish curate, demonstrate a very astute awareness of the school's strengths, but also show an understanding of precisely those areas that need to be tackled to move the school on. Many governors visit the school on a regular basis whilst others use their professional skills for the benefit of the school. Governors hold the school to account and fulfil their statutory duties well.
35. Financial planning and budget control are good. The school ensures that it applies the principles of best value well when purchasing goods and services. Spending patterns are closely linked to the educational priorities detailed in the school improvement plan. The office manager and the school clerk carry out their duties in a most pleasant, yet highly effective manner. This helps to ensure that the day-to-day running of the school is smooth, unobtrusive and very efficient. Taking all factors into account the school is providing satisfactory value for money.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	824 077
Total expenditure	888 432
Expenditure per pupil	2 636

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	102 906
Balance carried forward to the next	38 551

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

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

36. The school has nursery provision for 52 children who all attend on a part-time basis. Many, but not all, of the nursery children move on to full-time education in one of the two classes that cater for reception-aged children. One class contains reception-aged children whilst the other caters for reception-aged children alongside Year 1 pupils. The planning and teaching in this class caters well for the needs of the Foundation Stage children and there is parity of teaching, learning and curriculum provision between the two classes.
37. When children start at school, attainment levels are well below average and the communication and social skills of a significant minority of children are poor. The children benefit from good teaching and learning throughout the Foundation Stage and as a result achieve well and make good progress across all areas of learning. However, due to their low and for some children very low starting point, a significant minority of children do not attain the goals that children are expected to reach by the time that they enter Year 1 in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world and attainment is below average. The majority of children attain the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development, creative development and physical development.
38. Foundation Stage provision has improved well since the time of the last inspection. Overall the accommodation and resources are good. The school has rightly identified the need for the potential for the outside play area to be capitalised on more as an outside classroom where children can take part in even more stimulating activities. Plans are also in hand for the accommodation for children in reception to be rationalised in order to form a Foundation Stage unit where teachers and staff can work more closely together and where resources, facilities and good practice can be shared more easily.
39. Induction procedures are good and this helps to ensure that children make a smooth transition into both nursery and full-time education. This practice is maintained so that children are equally happy about moving into Year 1. Parents are kept well informed through newsletters and are comfortable to approach any member of staff should they have any worries or concerns. Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are satisfactory. The co-ordinator plays an effective role in monitoring planning and ensuring that all staff work together to provide a good quality curriculum that meets the needs of young children. However, the co-ordinator has not been given the opportunity to directly monitor, support or evaluate the quality of teaching and learning. This constrains the school's ability to disseminate good practice.
40. Teaching and learning are good and there is a valuable emphasis placed on first-hand experience as a basis for good learning. All adults are good role models and all have high expectations of good behaviour which sets the foundations for the early development of good social skills. There is good teamwork between all staff who all share a good understanding of how young children learn. The teaching assistants and nursery nurses make a significant contribution to children's learning. Assessment procedures are satisfactory and used well to identify children that may have special

educational needs or be higher-attaining children. The information is used well to guide planning. However the on-going assessment of what children can and cannot do as they take part in the different activities of the day is not recorded rigorously or formally enough to have its greatest possible impact on children's learning.

Personal, social and emotional development

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Relationships are of a high standard.
- Expectations of independence are set from an early age.
- Not all children demonstrate good levels of concentration.

Commentary

41. The good quality of teaching and learning ensures that all children achieve well and the majority of children attain the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. Children are welcomed into the nursery and are immediately made to feel part of the school community. This enables them to adjust quickly to the expectations of class routines and procedures. Right from the start there is an expectation that children will put away resources, help to clean up any mess and to make their own choices in activities they wish to take part in. These expectations continue in the reception classes where children dress and undress unaided, share resources, take turns and make confident choices when choosing activities. Staff set high expectations of behaviour and in return children show a desire to please. Although many children in both the nursery and reception classes show good levels of concentration and perseverance there are a minority that do not. The fact that certain children do not always complete tasks is not always picked up on by staff. The warmth of relationships throughout the Foundation Stage do much to create a positive learning environment, recognise children's successes and support children well when things do not go to plan.

Communication, language and literacy

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Opportunities are consistently capitalised on to develop children's communication skills.
- Good provision is made for role-play.
- Early reading and writing skills are taught well with a good emphasis given to the development of awareness of different letter sounds.

Commentary

42. The quality of teaching and learning is good and children of all abilities make good progress and achieve well. However, because of their low starting point, a significant minority of children do not attain the early learning goals in this area of learning. In the nursery opportunities are constantly capitalised on to develop children's speaking and listening skills. Whether it is talking about minibests, making model bees or role-play in the clinic, staff use open-ended questioning and cajole children's speaking skills at

every opportunity. Staff enter into role-play situations with gusto and enthusiasm and children's self-esteem soars. There is an insistence on children answering in sentences. Despite the staff's best efforts, the speech of a minority of children remains limited. Staff introduce mark making and writing opportunities in an effective manner, but few children form letters consistently. Children continue to make good progress in the reception classes. Role-play in the " Garden Centre" brings opportunities for the further development of children's communication skills. Teachers and support staff engage children in class and group discussions well and insist on attentiveness and in answering in extended sentences. Handwriting and letter formation skills are taught directly and well. Phonic skills are taught well and children are beginning to use these in the development of their early reading skills. Although good foundations have been laid, it is only a minority of children that are proficient readers and writers by the end of the reception year.

Mathematical development

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching provides good opportunities to learn through practical tasks.
- Work is well matched to the individual needs of children.
- Children have a limited mathematical vocabulary and a minority of children have difficulty recalling number bonds.

Commentary

43. Teaching and learning are good throughout the Foundation Stage. A good balance is struck between learning activities which enable children to take part in an array of practical, hands on learning experiences which are fun and enjoyable and the direct teaching of key mathematical skills. This approach enables children of all abilities to achieve well even though attainment is not at the expected level by the end of the reception year. In the nursery, children are introduced to an array of different and stimulating activities where numbers are introduced, matching and sorting activities are presented and where children can investigate capacity and weight through sand and water play. The input of staff is good, reinforcing concepts constantly for the less able, but always pushing on the learning of the higher-attaining children, for example, sorting using two or three criteria. Higher-attaining children recognise numbers to 10 and sort and match well, but even these children have a limited mathematical vocabulary. This practical emphasis continues in the reception classes where the children play well-resourced and planned number games which reinforce and extend their learning. Teaching introduces children successfully to different strategies that they can use to solve simple calculations. Numeracy is taught well. The highest-attaining children are counting on to 50 and beyond and are becoming aware of the properties of simple shapes. However, a good number of children experience difficulty in counting on, recalling number bonds or in using an adequate mathematical vocabulary when talking about their work.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children learn through a good array of practical activities which are attractively presented and arouse children's curiosity.
- Staff work extremely hard at making the children aware of the world in which they live.
- Good use is made of computers.

Commentary

44. Teaching and learning are good and this enables children of all abilities to achieve well, although not all attain the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. In the nursery, children explore minibests and their habitats. They also examine the texture of different materials and understand that some may absorb water better or worse than others. The staff capitalise on opportunities to increase children's awareness of the world in which they live by looking at buildings and flowers. Children learn about their place in their family and how things grow. Lots of practical hands on activities help to bring learning to life, but few children have a secure understanding of the world beyond their own family and the immediate locality. In the reception classes, earlier learning is built on well. Children are taught well about plants, habitats, the properties and use of different materials. Children are beginning to establish a sense of chronology, but this is not secure. Children talk about simple features of their locality and staff use the local environment well to extend this awareness. However, children's awareness of the wider world remains limited. Good use is made of computers in the Foundation Stage to enhance children's learning through painting programs and mathematical and letter sound and name awareness programs. Children have also recorded traffic survey results on the computer. Discussions about feelings and happenings in their lives and the lives of others foster an early awareness of the importance of care and respect for others.

Physical development

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Physical skills are developed well in formal physical education lessons.
- There is scope for further development and use of the outside play area.
- Teaching of fine motor skills could be refined further.

Commentary

45. By the end of the reception year, most children reach the early learning goals. The quality of teaching and learning is good and children of all abilities achieve well. In the nursery, children play on bikes, large wheeled toys and other equipment that enhances their physical development. Children show satisfactory levels of balance and control and a good awareness of the needs of others. Staff partake enthusiastically in outside play and provide guidance and pointers as to how children can improve their physical prowess. In the reception classes, teaching in formal physical education lessons is good. Throwing and catching skills are taught well and lead to immediate

improvements in children's performance. Children really enjoy their physical activity and are delighted with their efforts when praised by adults. Careful attention to detail, such as using larger balls for those whose physical dexterity is less well developed, only serves to enhance learning. Fine motor skills, such as cutting and joining, are generally taught well in the Foundation Stage and children carry out tasks satisfactorily. At times more emphasis should be given to developing brush techniques so that more children use painting strokes rather than daubing.

Creative development

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good role-play opportunities are provided.
- Children are encouraged to be imaginative and creative.
- Work is acknowledged and celebrated through good quality displays.

Commentary

46. The majority of children attain the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. Teaching and learning are good and children of all abilities achieve well. Throughout the Foundation Stage children are provided with good opportunities to sing a variety of songs and the children thoroughly enjoy this, although some children have difficulty remembering the words. Teaching ensures that children have regular access to musical instruments where they explore sound. Children listen to music in a satisfactory manner and recognise that different instruments make different sounds. Plenty of opportunities are on offer in both the nursery and reception classes to take part in imaginative role-play. Staff are ready and willing to take an animated and enthusiastic role in enhancing children's imagination and creativity, even though children's responses are sometimes limited by the expressiveness of their language. This however does not diminish the children's sheer enjoyment. Teaching places a good emphasis on creativity through art as children produce observational drawings of a myriad of different plants, flowers and objects. Children mix their own colours satisfactorily. Their finished work is attractively displayed which not only adds to the quality of the learning environment, but also develops the self-esteem of children very well.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision for English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 and some pupils in Years 3 to 6 achieve well.
- Although set to rise significantly in 2005, standards are currently well below average by the end of Year 6.
- The teaching of reading and writing skills in Years 1 and 2 and for some Year 3 to 6 pupils is good, but in the mixed Year 3 and 4 class it is unsatisfactory.

- Although many pupils with special educational needs are taught well there is also some unsatisfactory teaching.

Commentary

47. On the basis of the 2003 National Curriculum tests for Year 2, pupils' attainment in reading and writing was average. When compared to similar schools attainment was well above average in writing and above average in reading. The 2003 National Curriculum tests for Year 6 pupils showed attainment to be below the national average and above average when compared to similar schools. Inspection findings show that standards in reading, writing and speaking and listening are at an average level by the end of Year 2 and all pupils are achieving well. Standards by the end of Year 6 are well below average but the school is on track to attain its highest standards in English in 2005 because of the above average standards of the Year 5 pupils. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 and some Year 4 pupils are currently achieving well. The achievement of pupils in the Year 3 and 4 class is unsatisfactory. The drop in standards between the end of the two key stages can be explained by a number of different factors. The present Year 6 class has a high percentage of pupils with special educational needs, a significant number of pupils have not spent their full educational lives at the school and over the last two years this class has been taught by a succession of different teachers. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls. Improvement has been satisfactory since the last inspection and has taken on a sharper focus since the appointment of the current headteacher.
48. By the end of Year 2 pupils listen attentively and are confident at asking and answering questions although the vocabulary they use lacks a little sparkle. By the time that pupils leave school many pupils follow instructions satisfactorily but there are a significant minority who do not listen well enough to staff or to classmates. Pupils' vocabulary is limited and many pupils find difficulty in justifying their views and opinions. By the end of Year 2, pupils are competent readers who read with a satisfactory degree of expression and understanding. Pupils are able to tackle unfamiliar words and phrases using a range of strategies. Pupils' writing skills are at an average level. Pupils use capital letters and full stops in the right places and presentation skills and spelling standards are at an expected level. Attainment by the end of Year 2 demonstrates good levels of achievement given the attainment levels when pupils start at the school. Reading and writing standards when pupils leave school are currently well below average. Although pupils read with a reasonable degree of fluency, very few have acquired higher order reading skills to access information quickly or to read beyond the literal level. Pupils do not have a wide or extensive knowledge of different authors. Spelling standards are below average and pupils' writing lacks expression and does not demonstrate the use of a good and expansive vocabulary.
49. Teaching and learning are good in Years 1 and 2. Teaching is satisfactory overall in Years 3 to 6, but there is a high level of variability. Teaching is good and at times very good for many Year 4, 5 and 6 pupils and is unsatisfactory for the pupils in the mixed Year 3 and 4 class because expectations are not high enough and the management of pupils is often ineffective. Elsewhere reading and writing skills are being taught well and there is a good level of expectation as to the quality and quantity of work pupils are to produce. The introduction of focused writing sessions is having a positive impact upon raising standards and is also improving many pupils' attitudes. Teachers' own enthusiasm and love of literature further promote pupils' enjoyment. In many lessons there is a good focus on developing speaking and listening skills. Work for pupils with learning difficulties is not always adapted well enough to their needs, because their individual education plans provide too little support for teachers in this task. However, as a result of the review of the role and responsibilities of the learning support

assistants, the quality of their work has had a significant impact upon the quality of teaching and learning for pupils with special educational needs. This said, there are occasions when the class teacher does not put the obvious skills and talents of the assistants to best use. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 who are withdrawn for special educational needs teaching do not benefit from a satisfactory quality of teaching.

50. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory and are set to be even more effective in helping to raise standards. The headteacher has empowered the co-ordinators to fulfil the role and responsibilities, which are now done with clarity of vision and a real sense of purpose. However, over time such opportunities have not been afforded to the co-ordinators. Assessment is satisfactory. Relatively recently, some good procedures for assessing pupils' work have been introduced. They are easy to manage and provide clear information about what pupils are learning and the progress they are making. The co-ordinators have rightly recognised that there is a need to ensure that even more effective use is made of test and assessment data for setting targets for individuals and for different groups of pupils. Although resources are satisfactory overall there is a shortage of general reading books and reference books that would appeal to older boys who are reluctant to read.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

51. Provision for literacy across the curriculum is satisfactory, although not necessarily systematically planned. In science, pupils are provided with a range of ways to record their work and some teachers make good points in marking about spellings and handwriting. During oral work in mathematics lessons, teachers encourage clear, careful reading and good listening. There are also opportunities for pupils to discuss ideas with partners. In history and geography opportunities to record work, including writing from different perspectives, such as personal accounts, newspaper articles and critical appraisal are evident in displays of work around the school.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 and most pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 achieve well and make good progress, particularly in their number work.
- At times there is not enough challenge for some higher-attaining pupils in Years 3 to 6.
- Teaching is most effective when pupils are actively involved in mental and investigative work.
- Unsatisfactory teaching is characterised by poor teaching strategies and low expectations of pupils.
- The co-ordinators have put in place good assessment procedures.

Commentary

52. The 2003 National Curriculum tests for Year 2, indicate that pupils' attainment was well below the national average and below average when compared to similar schools. The 2003 test results for Year 6 pupils showed attainment to be below the national average, but above average when compared to similar schools on the basis of prior attainment. Inspection findings indicate that by the end of Year 2 standards are in line with the

national average and pupils of all abilities achieve well. Inspection findings indicate that standards are well below the national average at the end of Year 6. This, largely, reflects the natural ability of this group of pupils who were identified as very low attainers in Year 2. However, pupils' progress has been further affected in that this cohort of pupils has been taught by a large number of different teachers over the last two years and there has been a high level of pupil mobility in this year group. The achievement of pupils in Years 3 to 6 is variable and satisfactory overall. Many pupils in Years 4 to 6 are achieving well. For pupils in the straight Year 3 class achievement is satisfactory, but for pupils in the mixed Year 3 and 4 class achievement is unsatisfactory. Across the school there is no significant evidence of differing achievement between boys and girls.

53. By the end of Year 2 pupils have good number skills. Practically all pupils have a secure understanding of place value and recognise sequences of number including odd and even numbers. These pupils have satisfactory mental agility skills and solve simple addition and subtraction accurately and in a satisfactory manner. Most pupils know the names and properties of a range of two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes. The current Year 6 pupils include a few pupils whose mental skills are well developed, but the substantial majority has difficulty with simple numerical problems. Most pupils understand place value, but their knowledge and understanding of decimals, fractions and percentages is unsatisfactory. The ability of most Year 6 pupils to handle data is limited, as is their ability to draw realistic conclusions from data. The current Year 5 pupils are attaining above average standards and the school is on track to attain its best ever National Curriculum test results in 2005.
54. Teaching and learning are good in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory with some good practice in Years 3 to 6. Tasks set for pupils in Years 1 and 2 are well matched to their individual needs and these lessons usually begin with a brief mental session that captures pupils' interest well. Lessons in Years 1 and 2 are suitably varied and proceed at a good pace and this effectively maintains pupils' motivation over sustained periods of time. The teaching in Years 3 to 6 is more varied in quality with the better teaching in the older classes. Where teaching is good or better, teachers have high expectations of their pupils and pupils are actively involved in their learning. Where the teaching is unsatisfactory, as in the mixed Year 3 and 4 class, lessons are poorly structured and the skills of teaching assistants inadequately used. Expectations of pupils in this mixed-age class are too low and the work not well matched to pupils' ability and prior achievement. Although the teaching for Year 3 pupils is satisfactory, here too there are times when work is not demanding enough for the higher-attaining pupils. Across the school teaching assistants contribute much to the quality of pupils' learning.
55. The subject is led and managed in a satisfactory manner and since the appointment of the current headteacher, the role of co-ordinators has become more rigorous in monitoring standards, teaching and learning. The co-ordinators have a good grasp of the strengths of the subject and are well aware of the areas for development. There are good procedures in place for assessing pupils' attainment, and pupils' performance in statutory tests has been carefully assessed. The results of this analysis have been used to inform teachers' planning. The use made of data to track pupils' progress and for target setting is not sufficiently developed and is recognised by the school in its school improvement plan as an area for development.

Mathematics across the curriculum

56. The use of mathematics across the curriculum is satisfactory. Some good examples were observed of pupils' mathematical skills being used to enhance their learning in, for

example, science where pupils measure and record their results and in design and technology where pupils are expected to draw and measure accurately. However, teachers do not plan specifically for the inclusion and promotion of mathematical skills in different subjects of the curriculum where opportunities might arise.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 and some pupils in Years 4 to 6 achieve well.
- Work is not always sufficiently challenging for some higher-attaining pupils in Years 3 to 6.
- Pupils have good opportunities to carry out practical tasks in Years 1 and 2.

Commentary

57. The 2003 teacher assessments for Year 2 pupils indicate that attainment was below national expectations and below average in comparison with similar schools. On the basis of the 2003 National Curriculum tests for Year 6 pupils' attainment was well below national averages and below average based on prior attainment. However, evidence from the current inspection indicates that standards are rising in Years 1 and 2, essentially because of the greater emphasis that is being given to practical and investigative work. Current standards of pupils in Year 2 are in line with national expectations. These pupils achieve well and make good progress. Standards by the end of Year 6, however, are well below average. This in part reflects the natural ability of this cohort of pupils. In addition, their progress has been further affected in that they have been taught by a significant number of temporary teachers over the last two years and a significant percentage of pupils have not spent their full educational lives at the school. This has adversely affected their progress, particularly in the acquisition of key skills. Overall, achievement in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory and good for the older pupils in school. The achievement of some Year 3 and 4 pupils is barely satisfactory. Inspection evidence indicates that standards are set to rise significantly for the present Year 5 pupils in 2005.
58. By the end of Year 2 pupils have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of living things, life processes, requirements for growth and electricity. Pupils handle minibeasts carefully and sensitively and make accurate drawings to illustrate their characteristic features. Pupils group living organisms based on observable features, such as the number of legs animals have in a satisfactory manner. Higher-attaining pupils have a well-developed scientific vocabulary and are developing a good understanding of the concept of fair testing. However, this good practice has not been fully embedded in pupils' learning by the time that pupils leave school. Pupils' scientific knowledge across all aspects of the subject is not sufficiently secure by the end of Year 6 and pupils are not confident or conversant with factors that might influence fair testing. Pupils' use of a scientific vocabulary when talking about their work is limited.
59. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall with some good and occasionally very good features, particularly in Years 1 and 2 and for some of the older pupils in school. Where lessons are good, teachers have high expectations of pupils. Pupils are encouraged to make careful observations and to record their findings accurately. In one

Year 5 lesson where pupils were investigating the effect of exercise on heartbeat, some very good probing questions by the teacher provided very good learning opportunities for the pupils with a consequent high level of achievement. In another lesson pupils in Year 6 were unable to gain most from a well planned and challenging practical activity due to their uncertain grasp of investigative methods. Scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that pupils' investigative skills are not developed progressively across the early years of Key Stage 2, particularly in the class comprising Year 3 and 4 pupils. There are also occasions when the higher-attaining pupils at this key stage are not provided with sufficient opportunities to plan and instigate their own investigations.

60. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory and continue to improve and impact positively on standards and how well pupils learn. Pupils' work is scrutinised and their performance in tests, including National Curriculum tests, is analysed and used to inform teachers' planning. However, test and assessment data is not used rigorously enough to track pupils' progress or to set challenging targets for individuals and for differing groups of pupils.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All aspects of the curriculum are covered well.
- Pupils are achieving well because key skills are being taught well.
- The leadership of the subject has led to improvements in standards and provision.
- Good procedures are in place that enable pupils' progress to be tracked.

Commentary

61. Standards are at an average level by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and continue to improve because of the regular and good quality access that pupils now have to computers and because of the good quality of teaching. Pupils are achieving well. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.
62. By the end of Year 2, pupils present information well using different formats such as text, graphs and pictograms. Pupils change the size of fonts in a satisfactory manner and know how to save and print their work. Pupils are developing more confidence at merging pictures and text and know that simple programs can be written for programmable toys to respond to. Pupils move through programs using the mouse and click on different icons confidently. Pupils use a basic technical language when talking about their work, but are less aware of how computer technology is used in the wider world.
63. Pupils are currently developing skills at a good rate in Years 3 to 6, but it is only for the last two years that pupils have had such regular access to computers in the computer suite. When pupils leave school they are competent computer users. Pupils produce PowerPoint presentations which are of a good standard. This work was linked well to work on mountain ranges in geography. Pupils show satisfactory skills in graphical modelling, control and in setting up and interrogating databases. Discussions with pupils indicate that they are less secure in using computers for drafting and editing their written work, although they produce information in a range of different formats well.

Their understanding of the potential of electronic methods of communication is not secure.

64. Teaching and learning are good. There is little doubt that pupils thoroughly enjoy using computers and staff are quick to capitalise on pupils' enthusiasm. Teachers demonstrate to pupils how to, for example, merge pictures and text or work out the cost of trips quickly using spreadsheets, and then set up meaningful activities where pupils can put their newly learnt skills to the test. Pupils respond eagerly and with a good degree of success because they have listened attentively. Teachers have undertaken a good amount of training and this has led to improvements in their confidence and expertise. It also means that any minor glitches can be dealt with quickly and no time is lost in advancing pupils' learning. Teaching also provides more challenging tasks for the higher-attaining pupils which means that their learning is accelerated. At times teachers make effective use of the skills of the higher-attaining pupils to assist classmates, but do not allow this to become overlong so that the learning of both pupils becomes impaired.
65. The subject is well led and managed. The subject co-ordinator has developed good documentation to support teaching and learning and has recently introduced a good quality skills- based curriculum. The co-ordinator has monitored teaching and learning well across the school and provides much informal and valued guidance for colleagues. Good assessment procedures are in place for tracking pupils' progress. There is a portfolio of work from across the school, but the work is not moderated and annotated to provide staff with greater guidance as to what is needed to attain at a specific level.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

66. The use of computers to support teaching and learning is satisfactory and is improving since the co-ordinator introduced a planning format which promotes the use of computers. There are some good examples of PowerPoint presentations in geography, merging pictures and text in a history lesson, comparing holidays now and in the past, and of presenting scientific and mathematical results in different formats. However, this good practice is not as consistent as it could be and opportunities are missed in literacy, research in art and design and history and for musical compositions.

HUMANITIES

67. Due to timetable constraints, little of the work of the school in these areas was seen. Consequently no overall judgements on the quality of provision and standards could be made. However work in **history** and **geography** was sampled by looking at pupils' work, talking to pupils and through looking at teachers' planning documents. The following represent the inspection findings.
68. Overall, pupils throughout the school are given a satisfactory range of experiences to promote skills and knowledge in **geography**. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of their locality and identify various landmarks. Pupils' mapping skills are satisfactory and pupils' awareness of different places around the world is satisfactory. Pupils name features of cities that may be different to those of small villages. The current Year 6 pupils have a weaker knowledge and understanding of the wider world in which they live. Planning shows that key geographical skills are taught alongside geographical knowledge, but pupils are not confident in locating different places using co-ordinates. Their knowledge of climate and physical features is satisfactory. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. Satisfactory

assessment procedures have been recently introduced, but have not yet had sufficient time to impact on standards or the quality of pupils' learning.

69. Work in **history** indicates satisfactory curriculum coverage. Pupils learn about different periods of history and by the end of Year 2 pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of famous people in history. Pupils have a satisfactory awareness of chronology and of the fact that different objects can tell us about how people in the past lived. In the two lessons observed at this key stage the subject was well taught. Planning shows that in Years 3 to 6 pupils learn about different periods of history and that an appropriate emphasis is given to the importance of primary and secondary sources of evidence. Pupils are taught that different people view periods of history differently, but there is little evidence that pupils undertake any independent study or research. Discussions with Year 6 pupils showed their knowledge and understanding of the subject to be limited. Their knowledge of events, such as World War II, was insecure, as was their understanding of the sequence of different eras, such as the Tudors and Victorians. Pupils had little knowledge of historical terminology such as " artefacts." Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory and although satisfactory procedures for assessing and tracking pupils' progress have recently been introduced they have yet to make a significant impact on helping to raise standards.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

70. Due to timetable constraints, little of the work of the school in these areas was seen. Consequently no overall judgements on the quality of provision could be made in subjects except **art and design**. However, aspects of other subjects were observed, pupils' books and teachers' planning documents were scrutinised and discussions with pupils were held. The following represent the inspection findings.

Art and design

Provision is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 use a good range of materials for both two- and three-dimensional work.
- By the end of Year 6, pupils have a good understanding of the design process.
- Pupils' art and design skills are used well across the curriculum.

Commentary

71. Standards are at an average level by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and pupils achieve well. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory.
72. Pupils in Year 2 use a good variety of materials to present their ideas and in their designs, in both two and three-dimensional work. They study the work of famous artists and draw and paint in different styles in a satisfactory manner. The work on display is often of a good standard and, in discussion, pupils discuss what they have done and comment on similarities and differences between their work and that of others. By Year 6, pupils have a good understanding of the design process, their illustrations are clear and annotated and record the materials they propose to use. Pupils are provided with

many opportunities to work in a range of different media. Higher-attaining pupils refine their techniques well with the consequent good quality in the finished product. These higher-attaining pupils have good evaluative skills and make sensible suggestions as to how their efforts could be improved.

73. Teaching and learning are good across the school. The teaching strikes a good balance between the acquisition of skills and allowing pupils freedom of expression. In lessons, pupils enjoy the work and respond to the challenging tasks set and are acquiring skills well. Overall, the teaching incorporates a wide range of stimuli including using the local environment and this significantly extends pupils' learning experiences. Pupils talk enthusiastically about their work in art and design and visits, for example to a sculpture park provides good additional stimuli for their three-dimensional work. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to put their artistic skills to good use in subjects such as history and religious education.
74. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and supports the teaching across the school. She ensures that there are suitable resources available and gives advice where necessary. Good assessment procedures are in place, but these have not yet had time to have their greatest impact on the quality of learning or standards.
75. In **design and technology** evidence from pupils' work indicates that standards are at an average level by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Teachers' planning indicates that the subject has an adequate allocation of time and discussion with pupils indicates that they have a growing sense of awareness of the design and making processes. Scrutiny of pupils' work in Years 1 and 2 shows that pupils design their models in a satisfactory manner illustrating their designs with labelled diagrams to signify the main features. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are offered the choice of working with a good range of different materials and are proficient in such skills as measuring, cutting and joining materials. Pupils evaluate their finished products satisfactorily and many make constructive suggestions as to how improvements might be made. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good but have not yet had time to have their greatest impact on the quality of provision or learning in the subject.
76. In **music** evidence indicates that standards are at an average level by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Planning shows that over the course of the year pupils throughout the school are provided with opportunities to sing and perform, to appraise music and to compose. Younger pupils sing well and with gusto in assemblies and name different instruments of the orchestra. By the time that pupils leave school they continue to sing well, are aware of musical terminology such as "timbre, volume and pitch" and have a satisfactory knowledge of the names, if not the works, of different classical composers. Pupils are provided with opportunities to play a range of instruments with good quality tuition provided by peripatetic teachers from the Local Education Authority. The school has a choir and pupils can volunteer to take part in the musical productions that the school puts on, on a regular basis. Evidence suggests that not enough opportunities are provided on a regular basis for pupils to listen to music from different cultures or to visit concerts.
77. In **physical education** there is nothing to indicate that standards are not at an average level by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Planning indicates that over the course of the year pupils take part regularly in floor and gymnastic work, dance, a range of different games activities and athletics. Most pupils leave the school being able to swim at least 25 metres. The older pupils have taken part in a residential visit where they participate

in a range of outdoor pursuit activities. The school takes part in a good number of inter-school competitions in sports such as football, cricket and athletics. The school provides a satisfactory range of extra-curricular sporting activities and these clubs are popular and well attended. Links with local sporting clubs and colleges provide pupils with coaching in a range of sports. Discussions with pupils indicate that they enjoy taking part in physical activities and feel that their participation helps to improve their personal and social skills as well as developing their physical prowess.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

78. All pupils benefit from regular lessons dedicated to their personal development and from the recently introduced "circle time" during which they have the opportunity to discuss their feelings with their teachers and classmates. In lessons, pupils show that they are developing an understanding of how to handle inappropriate peer pressures and most pupils respect the needs of other people. Pupils are made aware of the dangers of substance abuse and the older pupils receive sex and relationships education. Parents who responded to the inspection questionnaire are all happy with the personal development of their children.
79. The new headteacher has rightly identified aspects of personal, social and health education and its co-ordination as an area for further development. A school council is in place and pupils really value the opportunity it gives them to contribute to decision making within the school. The co-ordinator is now clear about the future priorities and has made good links to what is taught in religious education when designing the curriculum for personal, social and health education. Good progress has been made by the school regarding its involvement in the 'Healthy Schools' scheme.

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	4
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	5
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	4
Attendance	5
Attitudes	4
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	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	4
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	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	3
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).