

INSPECTION REPORT

**ST MARY AND ST MARGARET'S CHURCH OF
ENGLAND (AIDED) PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Castle Bromwich, Birmingham

LEA area: Solihull

Unique reference number: 104097

Headteacher: Mrs N Jones

Lead inspector: Mr K Williams

Dates of inspection: 14th – 17th June 2004

Inspection number: 257806

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

© Crown copyright 2004

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

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	3-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	234
School address:	Southfield Avenue Castle Bromwich Birmingham West Midlands
Postcode:	B36 9AX
Telephone number:	0121 7472025
Fax number:	0121 7303180
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr S Davies
Date of previous inspection:	22 nd June 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St Mary and St Margaret's is a Church of England Primary School situated in Castle Bromwich. There are 234 boys and girls on the roll, which is about average. The pupils join the nursery at the beginning of the year in which they are three. The attainment of pupils on entry to the school is broadly average. The vast majority of the pupils are of white British heritage and there are also pupils from Indian, black Caribbean and mixed heritage backgrounds. An average proportion of pupils (46) have been identified as having special educational needs, including two who have Statements of Special Educational Needs. Almost five per cent of the pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is below average. The headteacher has been in post since September 2003.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21074	Keith Williams	Lead inspector	English, information and communication technology, design and technology, physical education
9619	Robert Miller	Lay inspector	
32318	Nick Beech	Team inspector	Mathematics, science, music, special educational needs
23686	Pam White	Team inspector	Art and design, geography, history, Foundation Stage

The inspection contractor was :

Inspire Educational Ltd

The Coach House
132 Whitaker Road
Derby

DE23 6AP

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

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	8
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	10
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	15
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	18
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	31

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school provides a **good standard of education** and the leadership, management and teaching are good overall. The children make a good start in the Foundation Stage and achieve well. The achievement of the pupils in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory and by the end of Year 2, where there has been significant disruption to their teaching, standards are average in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils' achieve well in Years 3 to 6 and, by the end of Year 6, standards are above average in the core subjects. Overall, the school gives good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The school has a very positive and caring Christian ethos and it is well led and managed by the headteacher, governors and staff
- The children in the Foundation Stage and Years 3 to 6 achieve well because the teaching is consistently good
- Standards could be higher by the end of Year 2 and the more able pupils could achieve more
- The pupils have very positive attitudes, behave very well and their personal development is very good
- Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) achieve well across the school
- The arrangements for tracking the pupils' progress are new and the pupils are not yet sufficiently involved in assessing and improving their own work
- The role of the subject co-ordinators does not yet include sufficient opportunities to monitor the teaching and learning

Overall the school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection. By the end of Year 6, standards are higher in information and communications technology and art and design, but they are lower in the core subjects by the end of Year 2. Assessment is used well to inform the planning of work in the Foundation Stage and Years 3 to 6 and there are good opportunities for the pupils to discuss their learning. Financial planning is now good, although there is still more to do to develop the role of subject co-ordinators, and the achievements of pupils are celebrated well amongst parents and the community.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2004
English	B	C	A	B
mathematics	D	C	A*	A
science	B	A	A	A

Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average

A means that the results were among the top five per cent nationally*

Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.

Inspection evidence confirms that, overall, the pupils' **achievement is good**. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well and, by the end of reception, most are likely to achieve the goals expected of them in each of the areas of learning and exceed those goals in their personal, social and emotional development. In the last set of national tests for pupils in Year 2 standards were well above average in mathematics and reading and average in writing. In this year's Year 2, largely because of the disruption to learning caused by changes of teacher, standards are lower. The

achievement of the pupils in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory and, by the end of Year 2, standards are average in English and mathematics. More could be expected of the more able pupils in Years 1 and 2 and they occasionally underachieve. The pupils in Years 3 to 6 achieve well and, by the end of Year 6, standards in English, mathematics and science are above average. The small differences between the 2003 results and the standards in the present Year 6 are accounted for by differences between the two cohorts. Across the school, those pupils with special educational needs achieve well.

The pupils' **personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is very good.** They have very positive attitudes to school and their behaviour is very good. Attendance and punctuality are good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a good quality of education. The teaching is good overall and contributes to the good start made by the children in the Foundation Stage and the pupils' good learning and achievement in Years 3 to 6. The teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 are satisfactory and more could be expected of the more able pupils. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from the support they receive from the teachers and support staff and they make good progress. The teachers have very high expectations of the pupils' behaviour. The new assessment arrangements do not yet involve the pupils sufficiently in assessing and improving their work.

The school provides a good curriculum and there is a good range of activities to enrich the curriculum. The care and welfare of the pupils are very well managed and they are offered good support and guidance. The school benefits from good links with parents, the community and other schools.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good. The new headteacher has a very clear vision for the school's development and a very strong sense of purpose to achieve it. Together, the headteacher, staff and governors are committed to raising standards and they have created a very positive ethos in which all pupils, including those with special educational needs, can learn and achieve well. However, subject co-ordinators are not yet sufficiently involved in monitoring the teaching and learning. The work of the governing body and the management of the school are good.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Most parents have very positive views of the school. In particular, they indicate that their children like school, are expected to work hard and they behave well. They feel that the teaching is good and the school is led and managed well. A small number of parents would like more information about how their child is getting on. Although the inspection evidence indicates that the information provided for parents is good, the school has identified this as an area for development and has made revisions, including an improved format for the annual report on children's progress. The pupils share the view that they are expected to work hard and they like school. They are confident that there is an adult they could turn to if they had a problem.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards at the end of Year 2 and ensure that sufficient challenge is provided for the more able pupils
- Involve the pupils more in the assessment of their work and improve their understanding of how they can improve
- Continue to improve the co-ordination of subjects, so that the co-ordinators have more influence over the quality of teaching and learning

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

The evidence of the inspection confirms that the pupils' achievement is good overall. The children in the Foundation Stage and in YearS 3 to 6 achieve well and pupils in Year 1 and 2 achieve satisfactorily. Standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are average at the end of Year 2 and above average at the end of Year 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards could be higher by the end of Year 2 and the more able pupils could achieve more
- The children in the Foundation Stage make a good start to their education and they achieve well
- The pupils with special educational needs make good progress because they receive good support

Commentary

1. The children's attainment when they first join the nursery covers a broad range but it is average overall. The good provision, teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage mean that the children achieve well. Almost all of the children will exceed the goals set for them by the end of reception in their personal, social and emotional development. In the other areas of learning, the children are likely to achieve the goals expected of them, with about one third of the children exceeding them.
2. The school's results in the 2003 National Curriculum tests for pupils in Year 2 were well above average in reading and mathematics and average in writing. When compared with schools in similar circumstances, the results in reading and mathematics were above average, while those for writing were well below average. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 was well above average in reading and mathematics and it was above average in writing. The results over recent years have been improving at a slower rate than the national picture.
3. In Years 1 and 2, inspectors found that the pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall and, by the end of Year 2, they are attaining average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. This is lower than at the time of the previous inspection and generally lower than the picture shown in the national tests in the intervening years. The pupils currently in Year 2 have experienced a period of disruption to the teaching in the past two years and a consequence of this is that, over time, too little account has been taken of the needs and capabilities of the more able pupils. These pupils have often been expected to carry out work at a similar level to the other pupils or, where more difficult work has been planned, this has still been at too low a level. As a result, the more able pupils sometimes underachieve, particularly in the core subjects.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.5 (17.7)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	14.7 (13.8)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	17.7 (18.4)	16.3 (16.5)

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

4. In Year 6, in 2003, the national test results were well above average in English and science and amongst the top five per cent nationally in mathematics. When compared with similar schools, the results were above average in English and well above average in mathematics. The proportion achieving the higher Level 5 was well above average. Over recent years, the results have been improving at a similar rate to the national picture.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	29.4 (27.4)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	30.1 (27.0)	26.8 (26.7)
science	31.1 (30.4)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 28 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

5. Inspectors found that rate of progress made by the pupils in Years 3 to 6 increases and they achieve well, largely because they benefit from teaching that is consistently good, often very good and occasionally excellent. Standards are rising. The pupils in Year 6 make particularly brisk progress and, by the time they leave the school, standards are above average in English, mathematics and science. The school has focused on raising standards in writing and this is proving successful amongst the older year groups, who write at length and using increasingly more sophisticated language. The small differences between the 2003 results and the standards in the present Year 6 are accounted for by differences between the two cohorts.
6. The pupils with special educational needs achieve well across the school because they are taught well in lessons and on the occasions when they are withdrawn from class to work with the support staff. The teachers and teaching assistants have high expectations of them and they respond well, so that, by the end of Year 6, many of the pupils with special educational needs produce work of a good quality.
7. Beyond the core subjects, standards are in line with what is expected of pupils at the end of Year 2 in information and communication technology (ICT), art and design, geography and physical education and the achievement of most pupils is satisfactory. By the end of Year 6, standards are above those expected in ICT and art and design and the pupils achieve well, which is an improvement since the last inspection. Standards are in line with what is expected in geography and physical education.

Pupils’ attitudes, values and other personal qualities

The pupils’ attitudes, behaviour and personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural and development, are very good. Attendance is good and the vast majority of pupils are punctual.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils’ attitudes to learning, and the values they hold, enable them to learn well in class and to enjoy school
- Very good behaviour and relationships amongst the pupils reflect the high expectation of the staff
- The school plans effectively to ensure that pupils gain wide experience in developing their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding

- More could be done to establish, quickly, the reasons for unexplained absences

Commentary

8. The rate of attendance has remained above the national average for the past three years. However, unexplained absences are not always followed up quickly enough and family holidays taken during term time are on the increase.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.8	School data	0.0
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

9. The pupils enjoy coming to school and develop very strong relationships with others in their classes. Pupils of all ages have very good attitudes to their work and to their life in school. As a result, punctuality is very good and the pupils enjoy their lessons. They are very well behaved and co-operative. They listen to adults and follow instructions, because the staff set high expectations for their conduct. The pupils are encouraged to take on responsibilities as they progress through the school and this is an improvement since the last inspection. Parents agree that this is helping their children gain in confidence and self-esteem. As a result pupils are becoming more mature and independent. There is a strong emphasis on ensuring that all pupils are included in school life and, as a consequence, all the pupils feel valued and work very well in harmony with each other. Incidents of bullying and racism are rare and, where they do occur, the school deals with them swiftly and effectively. There have been no exclusions in the past year, so the table showing exclusions is not included.
10. The pupils are proud of their own background and beliefs. They are developing a good spiritual awareness and understanding of their own and others' beliefs through the teaching of religious education, assemblies and the good provision for their personal, social and health education. They respect the views and beliefs of others and understand that this is important. Very good moral development is fostered through the clear rules and reminders of why they should consider the needs of others. The pupils are able to distinguish right from wrong and there are many opportunities, in and out of school, for them to develop very good social skills, for example by raising money for a number of local and national charities. The pupils' awareness of living in a multi-cultural society has improved since the last inspection through initiatives such as the close links established with an inner city school in nearby Birmingham.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

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

Teaching and learning

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good in the Foundation Stage and Years 3 to 6
- Teaching and support staff value all of the pupils and they ensure that those with special educational needs are able to play a full part in lessons and make progress
- More could be expected of the more able pupils in Years 1 and 2
- The staff have very high expectations of how the pupils should behave and they respond well
- The arrangements for tracking the pupils' progress are new and the pupils are not yet sufficiently involved in assessing and improving their own work

Commentary

11. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. It has a positive impact on the standards attained by the pupils by the time they leave the school, their achievement and the progress they make. Teaching was good or better in almost eight out of ten lessons seen and it is particularly strong in Year 6, where it is consistently very good and sometimes excellent.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 43 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (2%)	14 (33%)	19 (44%)	9 (21%)	0	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages.

12. Teaching in the nursery and reception class is good and sometimes very good, enabling the children to make a good start to their education. The teachers have a good understanding of how these young children learn and they work very closely with the teaching assistants. They are well informed about what the children need to learn and they work very effectively to support their learning. Although there is a good balance of activities chosen by the children and those led by the adults, there are times when too much input from the adults limits the opportunities for the children to explore and investigate independently. There are good relationships between parents, children and staff and high expectations of what can be achieved, so that these children make good progress.
13. The quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory overall. Whilst good teaching was seen in Year 1 in science and the foundation subjects, more could be expected of the more able pupils in the Year 1 and 2 classes, particularly in literacy and numeracy. The pupils in Year 2 have experienced a period of disruption to their teaching over the past two years, due to long term staff absences. The temporary arrangements for the class are ensuring that the pupils receive sound teaching in a safe and secure environment. However, the pupils' previous work indicates that, over time, there has been too little emphasis on ensuring that the more able pupils receive the more demanding work that they are capable of completing. The school has taken steps to address this by deploying a senior member of staff to work with this age group in the coming school year.
14. The teaching in Years 3 to 6 is consistently good and often very good. The planning takes good account of the differing needs of the pupils and ensures that there is a good level of challenge for the more able. Lessons are conducted at a brisk pace and the teachers ensure that all of the pupils are actively involved, for example by posing questions aimed at groups of pupils of a specific ability. The teachers have a good understanding of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy and have the confidence to modify its format depending on the nature of the work

being covered and the pupils' capabilities. Over the past year, the school has focused, rightly, on raising standards in writing with the result that pupils have produced many examples of high quality writing for a range of purposes and audiences, contributing to the good standards seen by the end of Year 6. The pupils in this year group benefit from teaching that is consistently very good and sometimes excellent.

15. Across the school, the teachers have very high expectations of how the pupils should behave and how they should approach their work. Incidents of unacceptable behaviour are extremely rare and, as a result, the pupils are able to concentrate, learn and make progress. They enjoy the teachers' judicious use of humour.
16. The teachers plan very effectively to ensure that the pupils with special educational needs are included and supported in lessons in all classes. For example, in a Year 4 science lesson on the parts of a flowering plant, the pupils with greatest need sat close to the front of the class enabling them to see the teacher's presentation more clearly. They were then well supported by the teacher and teaching assistant who, as they dissected a flower, stimulated discussion about the names and function of the different parts. The individual education plans are good; the targets set for the pupils are based on careful assessment of their needs and their progress towards them is carefully monitored. Achievement assemblies emphasise the progress of all pupils, including those with special educational needs. The work of the class teachers is supported by a support teacher, who works with groups of pupils to focus on developing their language and communication skills. A Year 1 group, for example, developed their use of adjectives by describing the appearance, smell and taste of exotic fruit having previously read the story 'Handa's Surprise.'
17. New assessment arrangements have been implemented since the beginning of the year and the staff are beginning to collect the information that, in time, will enable them to track the pupils' progress from year to year. All subjects are included in the process, although some are longer established than others, and each has a helpful portfolio of completed work to support consistency of judgements. It is important that an overview across all subjects is maintained to ensure that the procedures remain manageable for the staff. The results of the assessments are used to identify strengths and weaknesses and set targets for individuals and groups of pupils. Marking is generally good across the school and, in the best examples, informs the pupils of how they can improve. However, this is not yet a consistent feature in all classes and, overall, the pupils receive too little information about how well they are doing and what they need to do to reach the next level. There are few examples of the pupils being involved in assessing their own work. These have been identified as areas for development by the school. The regular assessments of children in the Foundation Stage are used to form a profile of each child's achievements and to keep a check on their progress. The exchange of assessment information between the nursery and the reception classes is good and has improved since the last inspection. The school is currently identifying ways to extend this good practice as the children move into Year 1.

The curriculum

The school provides a good range of curricular opportunities, both inside and outside the curriculum. Accommodation and resources are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is broad and balanced and contributes to the good start made by the children in the Foundation Stage and the above average standards at the end of Year 6
- The provision for those pupils with special educational needs is good
- The planning in Years 1 and 2 does not always take sufficient account of the more able pupils
- The pupils benefit from a good range of visits and visitors
- Good links are made between subjects and information and communication technology is well used

Commentary

18. The curriculum is broad, balanced, meets statutory requirements and contributes to the above average standards at the end of Year 6. There is a good and varied curriculum for the children in the nursery and reception classes. The teachers plan thoroughly and liaise well with each other in order to provide a good variety of learning opportunities based on a chosen theme. Good links are made between all of the areas of learning and there is a good balance of activities chosen by the children and those directed by the teacher.
19. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum. The provision for those pupils with special educational needs is good. Individual education plans are clear and the targets set for the pupils are based on a careful assessment of their needs and their progress towards them is carefully monitored. Some small group work, led by a part-time teacher, complements the class-based work and focuses on developing the pupils' language and communication skills. The pupils who attend these groups make good progress and their parents value the support they receive. The school plans to increase the provision for small group work from September 2004.
20. The school is equally committed to meeting the needs of gifted and talented pupils and this is particularly successful amongst the older pupils, who achieve well because of the support they receive. For example, a group of Year 6 pupils, who are talented in the use of ICT, have taken part in a project led by the local education authority, which has been followed up in school. They have worked on creating a multi-media presentation and classroom activities for pupils in Years 1 and 2, based a story book. A talented musician in Year 6 regularly plays the piano as the pupils enter assemblies. The planning for more able pupils in Years 1 and 2 does not always take sufficient account of the levels that these pupils are capable of achieving and there are many examples of them carrying out the same work as other pupils. Consequently, their achievement, while generally satisfactory, could be better.
21. The range of educational visits and visitors to enrich the curriculum is good. In Year 2, for example, the pupils visited St John's museum to take part in a Victorian school day. During a geography topic on rivers, the Year 4 pupils went to the River Cole to carry out fieldwork including measuring the depth and speed of the river. The local MP has visited the school as part of the work on citizenship. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities at lunch time and after school, aimed mainly at the pupils in Years 3 to 6. The promotion of participation in the arts is good. The pupils in Years 3 and 4 benefited from taking part in a workshop led by an African dancer and presented their work to the whole school. Opportunities to take part in musical activities, in and outside the school day, are good throughout the school.
22. A strong feature of the school's curriculum is the way that links are made between subjects. This begins in the Foundation Stage where, for example, the children use songs, rhymes and role-play to develop their language and mathematical skills and all areas of learning contribute to their personal and social development. In Years 1 to 6, there are many opportunities for the pupils to use their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects and the use of computers and the Internet

in subjects, such as mathematics, science, art and design and history is good. As well as making the work more interesting, the pupils benefit from these regular opportunities to practise and extend their skills.

23. The school has a good number of qualified teachers to meet the needs of the National Curriculum. The accommodation and resources are good and they support the delivery of the curriculum effectively. The school has its own well maintained swimming pool, a music room, a room for the special educational needs groups and an ICT suite. This has recently been supplemented by a class set of laptop computers. There is no climbing equipment in the small outdoor play area for Foundation Stage children.

Care, guidance and support

The school provides very good levels of care and attention to the welfare, health and safety of the pupils. The pupils are provided with good support, advice and guidance. There is good involvement of pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are very effective procedures to ensure that the pupils work and play in a safe and healthy environment
- The pupils have a very good and trusting relationship with the adults in the school and have access to well-informed support and guidance
- The school is active in seeking the views of the pupils

Commentary

24. This is a very caring school where the staff treat the pupils fairly and with respect. This ensures that pupils are comfortable about approaching individual teachers or support staff for help or guidance. The staff know the pupils and their families very well, are sensitive to their needs and are able, therefore, to provide good support and guidance. The developing assessment procedures enable the staff to provide targeted support for individuals, particularly those with special educational needs. This support and guidance contributes to their good achievement.
25. Health and safety arrangements are secure and risk assessments are carried out for the premises and school trips. The school building is kept in a very clean condition and is well maintained. The quality of care and attention to medical needs during the day is very good. Child protection procedures are well known to all staff. There are good links with outside agencies.
26. The school actively encourages the pupils' views in informal and formal ways. The pupils say that class teachers listen to their ideas. The school council considers matters such as new playground games, equipment and rules of conduct. This contributes very well to the pupils' personal development.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has good links with parents, the community and other schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are kept well informed about the school and their children's progress
- The links with the community, whilst good, have been identified by the school as an area for development
- There are good procedures for dealing with any parental concerns or complaints
- The good links with other schools ensure a smooth transition for the pupils to their next stage of education

Commentary

27. Parents are very satisfied with the work of the school and what it provides. In particular, they say that their children like school, are expected to work hard and behave well. They feel that the teaching is good and the school is led and managed well. A small number of parents, however, say that the school does not keep them well informed about how their child is getting on. The school has recognised this as an area for development and has recently introduced a new format for end-of-year academic reports that clearly show target areas for development for each individual pupil.
28. The school has worked in close partnership with parents to ensure that they are informed about the curriculum. The headteacher has produced a comprehensive booklet explaining all aspects of the curriculum to parents. The mathematics co-ordinator led two very successful parent workshops on written methods of calculation and a workshop has been held for parents on safe use of the Internet for children. A series of workshops for parents wishing to develop their own word processing skills has been held in the school ICT suite.
29. Parents are kept well informed about school life through the prospectus, newsletters and school notice boards. They appreciate the opportunities to discuss their child's progress at formal and

informal meetings with teachers. The school uses these frequent opportunities to ensure that parents are satisfied and have no worries or concerns. If they do, the school does its best to resolve them quickly and effectively. Parents are supplied with curriculum information to help them contribute to their child's learning at home and this is an improvement since the last inspection.

30. There are close links with the Church and the rector is a regular visitor. The local area is used well to provide opportunities for the pupils to make trips and visits to enhance and enrich their learning and their personal development. However, the school has recognised the need to be more outward looking in the community. Local groups are increasingly encouraged to use the school premises, to ensure that the school remains an integral part of the locality, and the support of local businesses is sought. Plans are well in hand to provide a before and after school care facility.
31. The school links well with the local secondary school for joint initiatives and to ensure that the best teaching practice is shared. For instance, the pupils from the secondary school attend and take part in an art project as well as undergoing work experience. Discussions to share pupil information cover areas of concern to ensure a smooth transition for the Year 6 pupils to the next stage of their education. Students from the local college attend the school as part of their childcare training course.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The new headteacher has been very quick to assess the school's strengths and weaknesses and has established clear priorities for improvement
- The governors provide good support for the school and they fulfil their responsibilities well
- The headteacher and the governors, together with a knowledgeable bursar, plan and manage the school's finances well
- Performance management arrangements are new and are not yet an integral part of the school's self-evaluation process
- Recent changes and developments in the subject co-ordinators' roles are not yet fully embedded and have yet to influence sufficiently the school's monitoring of its performance

Commentary

32. Since taking up her appointment, the headteacher has tackled a range of issues and has placed continuing school improvement at the top of her agenda. She has a very clear vision for the school and is providing the drive and direction to bring about the required improvements, particularly in raising standards in writing. Her vision is shared and supported by the staff and governors, who have worked together to set out the school's aims, expectations and priorities in its improvement plan. The school's aims reflect its strong Christian ethos and are the basis for all of its work, which is carried out by a caring and committed team of governors, staff, parents and helpers. The school believes strongly in providing equal opportunities for its pupils and this is shown in the way that all of them, including those with special educational needs, have access to a wide and varied curriculum.
33. The school improvement plan is a long and detailed document but it provides a coherent structure for moving the school forward during a period of change. It is well constructed, prioritised and costed over a one-year period with useful five-year projections in some areas, such as premises and refurbishment. As

the school's list of immediate and urgent priorities eases, it is recognised that the document will become more concise.

34. The governors are very supportive of the school and have well-established committees that operate through formal meetings and working groups. They make a considerable contribution to school improvement planning. They have an annual planning day where they review the year's work and decide future targets and priorities. This process is much appreciated by the governors who clearly feel that it allows them to play their role in mapping the direction of the school. Several governors visit the school regularly to meet with staff and the pupils but, although valuable, the visits lack focus because they are not linked to observations or discussions with staff and pupils about specific subjects. This would enable them to build up a sharper picture of how well the school is doing.
35. Since her appointment, the headteacher has undertaken a range of monitoring and self-evaluation activities, some in collaboration with the local education authority. The core subjects and ICT are well led and managed and the coordinators have had a significant impact on the good standards attained by the end of Year 6. A check is kept on the teachers' planning and the work of pupils is evaluated, but this is not consistent in all subjects. A programme of lesson observations is underway, involving some of the subjects, and the school plans to make this more systematic and rigorous. It is important that this happens, particularly in respect of raising standards by the end of Year 2, so that it becomes an integral part of in the school's evaluation programme. Similarly, performance management arrangements have only recently been renewed and are not yet fully embedded. As yet, performance management targets are not used consistently to raise the overall quality of teaching and learning to that of the best. The school analyses data from tests in the core subjects and it is beginning to use this information to track the pupils' progress but, as this is in its early stages, it is not yet able to track the progress from year to year.
36. The provision for those pupils with special educational needs is well led and managed by the headteacher, in her role as special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO). She has a high level of expertise and works in partnership with the local education authority to develop a range of special educational needs programmes. A named governor with responsibility for special educational needs holds regular discussions with the headteacher and has a good knowledge of some of the pupils on the special educational needs register. The headteacher shares all of the information from internal and external assessments of individual pupils' needs with their parents, who value this recent development.
37. The key issues of the last report have, in the main, been addressed. Assessment data is now used effectively to plan further work, particularly in the Foundation Stage and Years 3 to 6, and the pupils have individual targets to work towards. The teachers provide good opportunities for the pupils to discuss their learning, usually during the plenary session at the end of lessons or through good quality questioning as they work. There are regular celebration assemblies where parents and members of the community are invited to share the pupils' achievements both in and out of school. The school acknowledges that changes in the subject co-ordinators' responsibilities, and expectations of them, remain an area of development but the co-ordinators are now provided with time to fulfil their role according to the priorities of the school improvement plan.
38. The school benefits from secure and prudent financial management. The governors, along with the headteacher and a knowledgeable bursar, are efficient in balancing the budget. At the time of the last inspection, the school had a large credit balance and a key issue was to ensure that this was used wisely to support the pupils' progress and personal development. This has been done and the school now carries forward a modest sum for contingencies. Finances are well targeted,

so that the school achieves the best value it can for its expenditure. For example, expenditure is monitored carefully to enable an effective level of staffing to be maintained and, in the forthcoming year, there will be an assistant head teacher and increased staffing to support the pupils with special educational needs. Day-to-day financial administration is good and allows accurate monitoring of the budget to take place. The recommendations of the latest audit report have been implemented fully.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	549,182
Total expenditure	563,187
Expenditure per pupil	2,226

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	29,277
Balance carried forward to the next	15,272

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

39. The school makes good provision for the children in the nursery and reception class. Thirty children are taught in a purpose built nursery that operates each morning and has good facilities, including a sizeable, secure area for outdoor play. There are also thirty children in the reception class, the majority of whom join from the nursery in September each year.
40. The very good relationships that exist between parents, teachers and the teaching assistants, combined with a good induction programme, mean that the children settle into school life quickly and easily and receive a good start to their education. The quality of the teaching for the children in the nursery and reception is good, with almost half the lessons seen being very good. The children are assessed regularly as they work at their activities and the information is used to form a profile of each child's achievements. This information is also used to keep a check on their progress and to provide individual targets. The exchange of assessment information between the nursery and the reception classes has improved since the time of the last inspection and it is now good. The school is currently looking at ways to extend this good practice as the children move into Year 1.
41. The attainment of the children when they start at the school varies from year to year and assessment information for the children currently in the nursery and reception classes shows a wide range of ability but, overall, it is average. The children generally achieve well with some particularly good achievement in the development of their communication skills and their knowledge and understanding of the world. By the end of reception, almost all of the children will exceed the goals set for them in their personal, social and emotional development. In the other areas of learning, the children are likely to achieve the goals expected of them, with about one third of the children exceeding those goals. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are good.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Personal, social and emotional development permeates all activities
- The children quickly develop independence and self-confidence
- They co-operate well with each other and with the adults in charge of them
- They develop a good understanding of what is right and what is wrong

Commentary

42. The children achieve well because the teaching is good and most of them are on course to exceed the goals set for them by the end of reception. This is a good improvement since the time of the last inspection. There is a good and consistent emphasis on this area of learning and the teachers and teaching assistants take every opportunity to highlight good manners as well as tolerance and kindness towards each other. Almost all of the children follow instructions and know what is expected of them. In response to the teachers' high expectations, they settle well to the planned activities and persevere with tasks. They are eager to learn new skills and usually put effort and

concentration into their work. The children learn to share and work together in a variety of situations, such as role-play and when playing with construction materials or when finding a partner during physical activities. The reception children show good levels of care, consideration and friendliness as they welcome back a child who has been ill. The children in the nursery and reception class show good levels of independence when dressing for practical and physical activities. Relationships are very good. The children respond very well to the adults supervising them and they listen and behave well. They have very good attitudes and are enthusiastic and keen to take part in the planned activities.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children have good speaking and listening skills and they are encouraged to develop their communication, language and literacy skills in all of the other areas of learning
- The teacher uses a range of stories, songs and rhymes as well as good questions in order to enrich the children's vocabulary and to encourage speaking and early reading skills

Commentary

43. The children achieve well because this area of learning is well taught. They make good progress and all of them are on course to achieve the goals expected of them by the end of reception. Several of the reception children are likely to exceed those goals, particularly in speaking and listening. Regular opportunities to sing songs and recite rhymes, as well as to join in the sharing of news, knowledge and information, help the children to improve and gain confidence in using spoken language. Good questioning by the teachers plays a key part in this process. The children's reading skills are developed through the sharing of books and the learning of initial letter sounds and key words from early reading books. The teacher also encourages the children to use picture clues and to predict what comes next as a successful strategy for understanding what is read. Both the nursery and the reception classes have a range of good quality books and the children enjoy a regular daily time when they can choose a book to read to themselves or to share with others. The enjoyment of books is promoted well and children learn to handle books with care. All of the reception children practise writing patterns and letter shapes and, from the start, the children are encouraged to use a cursive script. There are some good examples of their developing early writing skills as they use lists, labels, captions and sentences to record their learning. For example, some of the average and more able reception children can write a sentence about a mini-beast or can draw a tree with labels showing the trunk, leaves and roots. The less able children in the reception class and most of the nursery children draw pictures and copy or shadow-write. All of the reception children and some of those in the nursery recognise their name and can write it unaided. They also use tape recorders and listening centres confidently in order to improve their listening and comprehension skills.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Well-planned activities enable the children to learn about numbers, shapes and money

- The children’s mathematical learning is consolidated and extended through games and role–play
- Early counting skills are reinforced well and provide a good foundation for developing the children’s numeracy skills

Commentary

44. The children achieve well and several of the reception children are on course to exceed the goals set for them by the time they enter Year 1. The teachers’ use of songs, rhymes and counting games, to help make the learning of numbers fun, has a positive effect on the children’s progress. They learn the importance of ‘pointing, matching and counting’ to ensure accuracy. For example, the reception children count the correct number of spots on different ladybirds in order to make up and record their own addition sums. The teaching is generally good and learning is extended well through the teachers’ good questioning skills. In the reception class, questions such as, ‘What do you think is missing?’ or ‘How do you know how many there are?’ move the children’s learning forward and make them think more deeply. Additionally, the use of correct mathematical language ensures that the children’s mathematical knowledge and understanding develop well. The teachers make good links with other areas of learning, such as when the nursery children explain the patterns they have made using sweets to decorate a sugar snake, or when the reception children count the number of leaves and petals on flowers they are about to draw. The children consider size, shape and position when playing independently with shapes, large bricks and construction materials and the vocabulary of ‘under, over, through and round’ is emphasized well to the nursery children as they go on a ‘jungle expedition’ or enjoy the Lion and Bear Hunt stories.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children have very good relationships with the class teacher and teaching assistants, who provide good role models and are a knowledgeable source of information
- The activities are effective in improving the children’s observational skills and in evoking discussion, curiosity and enthusiasm
- The use of the computer, tape recorders and photography help the children’s early understanding of new technology
- Over-direction by the adults sometimes limits the opportunities for the children to develop independent enquiry skills

Commentary

45. Most of the children will achieve the goals set for them in this area of learning by the beginning of Year 1 and a significant number of the reception class have already achieved them. The teachers and the teaching assistants in the nursery and reception class have a very good understanding of the range of experiences the children need to develop and they support the children well in their practical activities. They ask pertinent questions and make good links with what the children already know. For example, their knowledge of size and capacity is applied when filling pots with compost ready for planting as they play in the ‘garden area’. The children gain good early computer skills and reinforce their learning by pointing, clicking and dragging pictures to make a sequence about height, age and growth. They also use programs to reinforce their learning in early reading and number skills. They learn about the passage of time through

celebrating birthdays and the changing seasons and also through a study of 'Ourselves'. They learn about movement as they study wheels and are beginning to grasp the importance of a healthy diet and the need for working in a safe environment, for example, in the kitchen. When making icing paste snakes, they begin to understand about the changes in materials and their awareness of the natural world is emphasised well as they learn about animals and plants in the jungle, handle and care for giant African snails and learn about mini-beasts such as ants, beetles and butterflies.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for the children's physical development is **satisfactory**.

- The children's confidence, independence and dexterity develop well through the planned activities
- The children achieve very well as they learn to swim
- For the reception children, there is a lack of climbing equipment in the small outdoor play area

Commentary

46. The children are on course to attain the expected goals in their physical development by the end of reception. Their achievement is satisfactory overall but both the nursery and the reception children achieve well in swimming. There is a good-sized outdoor play area for the nursery, with equipment for playing and climbing, and this supports the children's overall achievement very well. However, the area for the reception children is small and impractical because it is also used as a thoroughfare. Nevertheless, the reception children make good use of the space available and they also use the hall for indoor movement sessions. The quality of teaching in this aspect is good. Indoor lessons are well managed in order to develop the children's awareness of space and the class teacher participates well in order to provide a good role model for the children. The nursery and the reception children excel at swimming. They make good use of the school's own pool, a specialist teacher and the valuable support of parents, with the result that most of the children are confident in the water and many are able to swim by the time they are five. Additionally, the children's obvious enjoyment of the lessons and their very good effort in response to the teacher's high expectations make a valuable contribution to their personal and social development. Construction materials, simple tools and malleable materials are widely available to help the children develop their skills. The nursery and the reception children make good progress and show developing dexterity as they use pencils and crayons to colour pictures and use glue, beads, tools and equipment. Some of the reception children, for example, use scissors with a good degree of skill and control when they cut out pictures for a sequencing activity about the life cycle of a bird.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children experience a good range of creative activities that includes art and design, model making, cookery and music
- There are good opportunities for drama and imaginative play

Commentary

47. The children achieve well in the creative area of learning and many of them are likely to exceed the goals set for them by the time they start in Year 1. They have numerous opportunities to develop their creative skills through art and design, music and construction activities, working individually or with others as part of a supervised group. There are good opportunities for imaginative play and, with support and intervention from parent helpers, support assistants and teachers, the nursery children are able to play imaginatively, taking on the roles of explorers whilst the reception children work as gardeners or play the role of a rubbish collector. Music features prominently in the creative development of both the nursery and the reception children, through the singing of a range of songs and action rhymes and the use of the listening centre. The words and melodies of the 'Jolly Phonics' songs are popular with the reception children and this provides constant re-enforcement for their learning of letters and sounds. The nursery children achieve well as they use instruments to represent swishy grass, water and a swamp on a lion hunt journey. They develop their understanding of elementary dynamics and tempo as they make the sounds slower, faster, louder or quieter according to the tone of the story. All of the children handle the widely available materials confidently. Sand, chalks, crayons, play-dough and collage materials of different textures are accessible for the children to explore on a daily basis and they make good use of these to develop their senses and to investigate colour as they produce pictures and models.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils in Years 3 to 6 achieve well because the teaching is good but more could be expected of the more able pupils in Years 1 and 2
- There are good opportunities for the pupils to use and extend their language and literacy in other subjects
- The pupils are not yet sufficiently involved in assessing their own progress

Commentary

48. By the end of Year 2, the pupils' levels of attainment are average and their achievement is satisfactory. The pupils' rate of progress increases in Years 3 to 6 and, by the end of Year 6, they achieve well and standards are above average. Across the school, the pupils with special educational needs are well supported and they achieve well.
49. The school has rightly identified the improvement of writing as a priority and, under the good leadership of the co-ordinator, supported by the local education authority, has initiated a range of strategies over the past year. Lesson planning has been revised to increase the emphasis on writing, and to provide opportunities for the pupils to edit their work, and targets are now set for individual pupils. As a result of this work, standards are rising, particularly in Years 3 to 6. However, the school's evaluation of the pupils' work has identified weaknesses in Year 2 and inspection evidence bears this out. Due to long-term staff absence over the past two years, those pupils currently in Year 2 have experienced a period of disruption to their teaching. A consequence of this is that there has been too little emphasis on ensuring that more able pupils receive more demanding work. While most of the pupils reach the expected levels, too few of those capable of achieving the higher levels are doing so. Standards at the end of Year 2 are lower than at the time of the last inspection and the results in the national assessments in writing have been in line with or below the national average for quite a few years.
50. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and it is good, and often very good, in Years 3 to 6. This has a significant impact on the older pupils' achievement and reflects the results of the Year 6 national tests in recent years, which have generally been above or well above the national picture. Lessons are brisk and enjoyable. The teachers have very high expectations of the pupils and ensure that there is a high level of involvement in lessons. The pupils respond well to the many opportunities for them to ask and answer questions, offer opinions and listen to others in the discussions in literacy sessions and lessons in other subjects. The teachers have a good knowledge of how pupils develop their literacy skills and implement the National Literacy Strategy well, modifying the format to take account of the work being covered and the pupils' capabilities. The lesson planning ensures that the more able pupils are stretched and there are many examples of high quality, thoughtful and analytical writing, particularly amongst the older pupils. The pupils write for a wide variety of purposes and they develop a good understanding of how the careful choice of vocabulary can have an evocative impact on the reader, for example when writing poetry. Those who need more support with their work get it and the pupils with special educational needs are well supported across the school, which contributes to their good progress and achievement.

51. The teaching of reading builds upon the good start made by the children in the Foundation Stage. The reading programme is well organised across the school and the teachers keep a close eye on how well the pupils are doing. Reading journals provide a useful link between home and school and the support provided by parents at home plays a major part in the good progress made by the pupils. Consequently, the pupils read accurately and confidently and have positive attitudes to reading. Older pupils, in particular, enjoy talking about their wide ranging tastes.
52. A new system of assessing the pupils' work and tracking their progress was started at the beginning of the current year. The procedures are very comprehensive and wide ranging, but it is important that they remain manageable for the staff, particularly as the range of subjects covered by the provision broadens. The staff are able to track the pupils' progress over the course of the year but, as the procedures are newly established, monitoring over a longer period is not yet possible. The marking of the pupils' work is carried out conscientiously, but is not used effectively in all classes to support the new target setting procedures by informing the pupils of how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. Similarly, the pupils are not yet well enough involved in assessing their own work.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

53. Good use is made of the pupils' language and literacy skills in other subjects, which has a positive impact on their achievement in English and on the progress they make in other subjects. The pupils' speaking and listening are promoted well through the many discussions at the beginning and end of lessons. There are many opportunities for them to read a variety of texts, non-fiction books and to search for information on the Internet. They write at length but, in some classes, there is an over-reliance on using work sheets that limits the progress of the pupils' independent writing, particularly in science and geography.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching in Years 3 to Year 6 is consistently good and the pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well
- Good use is made of ICT to support the teaching and learning
- More could be expected of the more able pupils in Years 1 and 2
- The mathematics co-ordinator provides very good leadership

Commentary

54. In Years 1 and 2, the pupils' progress is satisfactory and their attainment at the end of Year 2 in line with what is expected of pupils of this age. The pupils' rate of progress increases in Years 3 to 6, they achieve well and, by the end of Year 6, standards are above average. The good standards are due to the consistently good, and sometimes very good, teaching in the older classes: the teachers have high expectations of the pupils and plan appropriately challenging work for the different abilities. In return, the pupils have positive attitudes to mathematics, work at good pace in lessons and consequently they achieve well.

55. The best lessons begin at a brisk pace and teachers have strategies for keeping all of the pupils involved; they plan questions that are targeted towards groups of pupils of different abilities. In the very good lessons, the pupils are challenged to solve mathematical problems and are given the opportunity to develop their mathematical communication and reasoning skills. A good example of this was seen in a Year 6 lesson, where the teaching is particularly successful and the pupils' achievement is very good. Here, the pupils investigated the relationship between the number of sides of a shape and the number of diagonals. The more able pupils talked about a general rule they had identified from patterns in the data they collected from investigating a number of regular shapes. They used this rule to predict how many diagonals would be on a shape with 100 sides.
56. The teaching is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 where, occasionally, the pace of teaching is too slow and questions are directed to individual pupils rather than giving the whole class or groups of pupils the opportunity to answer. When this happens, the pupils are too passive and consequently they begin to lose interest. The higher-attaining pupils in Years 1 and 2 could be more consistently challenged in mathematics lessons. Although the work is usually set at a higher level than for the pupils of average ability, many are capable of achieving higher standards. For example, in a Year 1 lesson the more able pupils were asked to order a series of two-digit numbers even though they were able to say and order three-digit numbers.
57. Throughout the school the pupils with special educational needs achieve well. They are well supported by the teachers and teaching assistants. Where appropriate, targets for mathematics are included in individual education plans.
58. The subject co-ordinator has a good knowledge of standards across the school. She has analysed the pupils' test results, conducted work scrutiny and held interviews with the pupils to identify areas for further improvement. This careful analysis informs the school improvement plan, training for teaching staff and led to two very successful workshops for parents on written methods of calculation. The co-ordinator has not had the opportunity to evaluate the impact of these initiatives by monitoring teaching and learning in classrooms.

Mathematics across the curriculum

59. The use of mathematics in other subjects is satisfactory. Good links are made with science where, for example, Year 4 pupils practised their skills in measuring capacity and length when they made an "orchestra" by putting different quantities of water into bottles which they blew into with straws of different lengths. Information and communication technology was used to support learning in several lessons during the inspection. For example, in Year 1 the pupils worked in the computer suite using a programme to calculate small amounts of money. Good use was made of a multi-media presentation to develop the pupils' understanding of co-ordinates in a Year 4 lesson.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in Years 3 to 6 achieve well and, across the school, the pupils with special educational needs make good progress
- Teachers make good use of investigations, first-hand experience and ICT in science lessons

- There are too few opportunities for the pupils to use and develop their writing skills in science
- The subject is very well led and managed

Commentary

60. The pupils attain levels in line with what is expected by the end of Year 2 and their achievement is satisfactory. The pupils in Years 3 to 6 achieve well and, by the end of Year 6, standards are above average. There is no difference between the achievement of girls and boys. Those pupils with special educational needs achieve well because the teachers have high expectations of them and give a good level of support in lessons.
61. The quality of teaching is good and an excellent lesson was seen in Year 6. The use of first-hand experience and investigative work is a central feature of lessons and this successfully develops the pupils' scientific skills, knowledge and understanding. In a good lesson in Year 1, the pupils tested a variety of objects and materials to investigate whether they would float; by the end of the lesson they were able to make simple generalisations about what they had observed. In a good lesson in Year 4 the pupils dissected a flower and were able to name and talk knowledgeably about the functions of each part.
62. ICT is used effectively to support the learning. In a good Year 3 lesson, the class worked in small groups using a computer to continue their work on creating a multimedia presentation on the lifecycle of a butterfly. In Year 6, the teacher used a laptop and projector to show pictures of birds covered in oil from an oil slick. This aroused a real sense of passion amongst the pupils and gave a very clear purpose to the task they had been set on finding a way to separate olive oil from water. The pupils' problem-solving and social skills, as well as their scientific knowledge, were very well developed in this lesson.
63. The science co-ordinator provides very good leadership. She analyses the pupils' work carefully to identify strengths and areas for improvement and plays a central role in organising an annual "Science Day" to enrich the curriculum. The school recognises that the role of the co-ordinator needs to be developed by creating further opportunities for monitoring the teaching and providing opportunities to share her expertise with colleagues.
64. Although the pupils record their work in a variety of ways, the written accounts produced by the pupils are often over-directed by the teacher so that the work produced by pupils of different abilities is almost identical. As a result, opportunities to develop the pupils' independent writing skills are often missed.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The provision has improved since the last inspection, standards are rising and are above average by the end of Year 6
- The subject is well led and managed
- Good use is made of computers in other subjects
- Assessment arrangements are new and the information is not yet used to inform the pupils about how they can improve

Commentary

65. Standards are in line with what is expected by the end of Year 2 and the pupils' achievement is satisfactory. By the end of Year 6, standards are above those expected and the pupils achieve well, which is an improvement on the findings of the last inspection. Under the good leadership of the subject co-ordinator, a range of strategies has been implemented successfully, including an increase in the availability of computers and an improvement in the knowledge and confidence of the staff.
66. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and it is good in Years 3 to 6. The staff make good use of the well-resourced suite for ICT lessons and for lessons in other subjects. Consequently, computers form a natural and regular part of the pupils' day-to-day learning. Lessons are well planned and this ensures that, over time, the pupils build on what they already know and can do. This was seen to good effect in lessons seen in Years 2 and 4. In a sound lesson in Year 2, the pupils used the mouse and keyboard controls competently to guide a 'ladybird' around a garden on their screen. The pupils also have the opportunity to operate a floor robot but, during the lesson, this was curtailed by technical difficulties. The pupils in Year 4 build on this by guiding a 'screen turtle' to trace the shape of letters. The route became increasingly more complicated as the more able pupils devised double thickness letters for the turtle to trace. They know how to instruct the turtle to move without drawing a line, by using the 'pen-up' and 'pen-down' facilities. The pupils achieved well in this good lesson.
67. There are many other examples of the more able pupils being stretched and the staff, clearly, have high expectations of what they are capable of achieving. Very interesting work is being done with a group of gifted and talented Year 6 pupils in a Citizenship Multimedia Project. These pupils were observed using laptop computers and digital video cameras to film a play-script of their own design. Supported by the subject co-ordinator, they had a very good understanding of the use of this technology, its benefits and shortcomings. They spoke very confidently about how they were going to import the video clip and manipulate the software to get the effects they desired. Good use was made of day-to-day assessment to identify a group of their classmates who needed help to save files and folders when using the Internet for their research. They were well supported by the class teacher and made significant gains in their understanding.
68. The subject is well led by the co-ordinator who, after taking up the post, was initially responsible for teaching ICT to each class. This year the onus has passed to class teachers and, following in-service training, this is working well. The co-ordinator provides support for planning and is on hand to provide support in some lessons. He has been instrumental in developing the computer suite and in the recent purchase of a set of laptop computers. The staff make good use of the 'smartboard'¹ during lessons in the suite. A comprehensive system of assessing the pupils' work is being developed and is beginning to provide the information needed to track their progress as they move through the school

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

69. This is a strength of the provision and has a significant impact on the pupils' achievement in ICT and the progress they make in other subjects. As well as the weekly ICT skills sessions taught in the suite, each class also has regular sessions to support, in particular, their literacy and numeracy. For example, in a mathematics lesson held in the suite, Year 1 pupils were observed

¹ This is an interactive white board that is linked to a computer-controlled projector. A large image is projected and the teacher, or pupil, is able to control the screen in much the same way as they would with a mouse.

using computers to develop their knowledge and understanding the value of money and giving change. The pupils often use computers to devise graphs and charts that they include in their reports. There are many examples of the good use of computers in other subjects, too. In a good Year 3 science lesson, the pupils used laptops in their classroom to gather information about the life cycle of a butterfly. In geography several of the classes have used a digital camera to produce photographic images and the pupils use art packages to create computer-generated pictures. The Internet is used as a regular source of information, for example, in history.

HUMANITIES

70. It was possible to see only one **history** lesson during the inspection. The evidence of this lesson, from talking to pupils and from a scrutiny of work in folders and in portfolios indicates that the pupils receive a worthwhile range of experiences. The planning and teaching are based securely on national guidelines and a start has been made in assessing the pupils' knowledge and understanding as they complete a topic. Learning is enriched and supported by visits and visitors to the school. The work carried out in history is frequently linked to other subjects and the pupils make good use of computers, for example, to present their projects in booklet form. They also use the Internet for research and know how to add pictures, graphs and charts to their work.

Geography

The provision in geography is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching is good overall
- The subject leader is knowledgeable and enthusiastic
- The pupils make a range of visits to support their work and good links are made with other subjects
- Occasionally, there is an over-reliance on commercially produced photocopied worksheets

Commentary

71. Standards are in line with those expected nationally. The majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well. The pupils' previous work shows that coverage of the subject is thorough in all classes. As they move through the school the pupils gain an increasing depth of factual knowledge and an understanding about the local area, as well as contrasting locations such as Milldale in Derbyshire, St Emilion in France, the island of St Lucia and the rainforests. The older pupils can identify the physical features of a landscape and show a good understanding of the use of maps and co-ordinates. The pupils' learning is supported at all levels by visits in and around the local area, as well as further afield.

72. The quality of teaching is good overall and very good teaching was seen in Year 6, where the teacher used sets of photographs very effectively to encourage the pupils to apply their previous learning and to use their enquiry skills to make logical, reasoned deductions about life in St Emilion. In a good lesson in Year 4, the teacher's good questions and high expectations had a positive impact on the pupils' learning about rivers and their characteristics. In both of these lessons, the teachers' enthusiasm, knowledge and good quality questioning were effective. However, the scrutiny of the work in the pupils' books shows that sometimes recorded work relies too heavily on the use of photocopied worksheets, or on copying text, and this can inhibit opportunities for the pupils to record their thoughts independently.

73. Planning in geography is based on the national guidelines and this ensures a good level of consistency across the school. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and provides good advice and support for colleagues. The pupils and staff use computers very well in order to gain information from the Internet to support and extend learning. In several of the classes, the pupils have used and produced photographic and pictorial images using a digital camera.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

74. It was only possible to see one lesson each in **design and technology** and **music** so judgements about overall provision are not possible. In the very good **design and technology** lesson seen in Year 4, the pupils used their knowledge of electrical circuits, learned in science, to devise switches to be used in the hand-held torches they were to design and make in subsequent lessons. The teacher had very high expectations of the pupils' capabilities and they, in turn, had a very strong understanding that their switch was only effective if it worked: as one child remarked about hers, 'It looks good; it *is* good, but it doesn't work!' They evaluated and modified their designs as they worked and recorded their work in clearly labelled diagrams. As a result of the very good teaching in this lesson, the pupils achieved very well. There are many examples of the pupils' high quality efforts around the school and in the carefully compiled portfolio of work gathered by the knowledgeable co-ordinator. The evidence of this work and from the teachers' planning indicates that the subject has a very secure place in the curriculum and a worthwhile range of activities is planned.

75. The **music** lesson seen in Year 1 was good; the pupils used movement to explore their response to changes in the timbre, tempo and dynamics of pieces of music. Their singing showed good control of pitch, dynamics and rhythm. The tuition provided by visiting specialist teachers, and the opportunities to take part in musical activities outside the school day, are good. The orchestra performs music to the rest of the school each term and the school choir is active and regularly sings at church fetes and occasionally at the Birmingham Symphony Hall. A whole school scheme has been developed to support the teachers and help them improve their teaching of music.

Art and design

Provision in art and design is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils to achieve well in Years 3 to 6 because the teaching is good and sometimes very good
- The pupils have very positive attitudes to art and design and the subject makes a good contribution to their spiritual and cultural development
- The pupils' achievement and the quality of their work could be higher at the end of Year 2
- Good links are made with other subjects

Commentary

76. Standards are in line with what is expected at the end of Year 2 and they exceed those expected by the end of Year 6. The scrutiny of the pupils' work on display and in the portfolios gathered by staff indicates that the strongest teaching is in Years 3 to 6 and this enables these pupils to achieve well. A varied programme of work is planned that is linked well to other subjects such

as English, history, geography and religious education. Across the school, the pupils use a wide range of media and materials including, for example, paint, crayons, pastels, fabric and string to produce two and three-dimensional work as well as pictures, patterns and observational drawings. Examples of work in the classrooms, on display and in the pupils' portfolios are mostly of good quality and this reflects the teacher's high expectations of the finished work. However, there are variations and, by the end of Year 2, the pupils could achieve more.

77. In the juniors, the pupils benefit from good and very good teaching. In a very good lesson in Year 6, the pupils studied examples of prints by Van Gogh and Monet and observed how the artists had used textures and colours to create a specific image. Good links were made with literacy as the pupils described the sky in one print as 'moody', 'gloomy', 'depressing' and 'cold'. They built on this by experimenting for themselves and developed and improved their work due to the good quality advice, guidance and support they received from the teacher. In the plenary session, they could talk about the style and technique they had used and one pupil described impressionism as 'when you can't quite see the edges'. In another very good lesson, in Year 5, the pupils showed great enjoyment and high levels of concentration as they used magazine pictures to produce effective collages showing how lines can create textures. The teacher's good knowledge, expertise and enthusiasm inspired the pupils. They wanted to do well and almost all of them were successful.
78. The art coordinator has evaluated the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and has adapted the national guidelines to provide a secure basis for teachers' planning. Designated themes for each year group ensure that the pupils build up their experience, skills and expertise over time and this has a positive and progressive impact on overall standards and achievement.

Physical education

Provision in physical education (PE) is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils experience a broad range of activities, enjoy PE lessons and work hard
- There is no clear overview of the subject across the school

Commentary

79. It was only possible to observe two PE lessons during the inspection. The evidence of these lessons in Years 1 and 3, from the teachers' planning and discussions with the pupils indicates that standards are in line with the expectations of pupils at the end of Years 2 and 6. The pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. The programme is well planned to cover the requirements of the National Curriculum and effective use is made of local coaches to provide expertise in, for example, football and tennis. Some of the activities are offered outside of the regular PE lessons and they provide good opportunities for the pupils to extend their skills, try out a wider range of sports than might otherwise be possible and develop links with the local community.
80. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. The Year 1 lesson was well taught by the class teacher, in the absence of the regular coach from a local tennis club. The activities were well thought out, building up the pupils' skill and confidence systematically. There was a clear focus on the techniques being learned and the pupils responded well. Most of them achieved well, hitting the ball with good control. The lesson was very well resourced, each pupil having access to a good quality racquet. There was a similarly clear focus on skill development in a Year 3

lesson that was quickly moved indoors because of inclement weather. The teacher skilfully modified the plan for the lesson, using equipment more suitable for indoor work. Despite these constraints, the pupils behaved well and worked hard to improve their throwing and catching. Both of the lessons were briskly paced. They were well organised and resourced to ensure a high level of participation from the pupils and provided the maximum opportunity for them to practise. A strength of the teaching was the way in which the teacher intervened throughout the lesson to develop and extend the pupils' skills, sometimes using the performance of individual pupils to demonstrate good practice.

81. In the absence of the subject co-ordinator, the staff have shared responsibility for the smooth running of the subject. This has been satisfactory, but it has meant that there is no clear overview of how the work develops from year to year. Upon her return, the knowledgeable co-ordinator is very enthusiastic to develop this aspect of her role as, at present, there are few opportunities to monitor the teaching and learning.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

82. It was not possible to see any lessons dedicated to personal, social and health education, so an overall judgement on the quality of provision is not possible. However, it is clear from discussions with the pupils, teachers and parents that the programme is well organised and contributes towards the pupils' personal development, their very positive attitudes to learning and their very good relationships with each other. Good behaviour is reinforced throughout the school and a high priority is placed on the pupils valuing themselves and taking responsibility for their actions. Parents, who appreciate what the school does to help their children develop maturity and independence, support this. There is a strong emphasis on ensuring that all pupils are included in school life and the school council further enhances their understanding of citizenship. This is taken very seriously by the pupils, who value the impact that they have had on school life including, for example, playtime facilities. The provision meets statutory requirements for education about drugs, sex and relationships and the science curriculum includes raising awareness of healthy living, the dangers of smoking and the need for exercise. A range of extra-curricular sporting activities that extends the awareness of, and participation in healthy exercise supplements this. Some of the pupils in Year 6, identified as gifted and talented in ICT, are taking part in an interesting Citizenship Multimedia Project, whereby they are creating multimedia stories for the pupils in Years 1 and 2 on issues such as 'fairness' and 'responsibility'. The younger pupils will also benefit from this initiative as they review and evaluate the completed books.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	3
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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