

# INSPECTION REPORT

## ST MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Deal, Kent

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 118763

Headteacher: Mrs A Keane

Lead inspector: Mr P Sudworth

Dates of inspection: 22 – 24 September 2003

Inspection number: 257851

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	5 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	208
School address:	St Richard's Road Deal Kent
Postcode:	CT14 9LF
Telephone number:	01304 375046
Fax number:	01304 375046
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Deacon Gerald Watkins
Date of previous inspection:	6 July 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school draws its 208 pupils on roll from a diverse range of social and economic circumstance, mainly from lower cost housing, although the percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average. It educates Catholic pupils in the area and others who have been baptised. Attainment on entry is below average. Most pupils are of white British background with a very small number of pupils from other ethnic groups. Three pupils have English as an additional language, although none is at an early stage of learning English. Twenty-six pupils have special educational needs, including one pupil with a statement of special educational need. The percentage of pupils who join or leave the school during an academic year is about the national average.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
2700	Mr P Sudworth	Lead inspector	Mathematics; Science; Music; Physical education; English as an additional language.
9957	Miss S Watts	Lay inspector	
22113	Mrs A King	Team inspector	Information and communication technology (ICT); Art and design; Design and technology; Foundation Stage.
20877	Mr D Pink	Team inspector	English; Geography; History; Special educational needs (SEN).

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

This is an improving school with the capacity to be more effective. Pupils reach at least the expected standards by age seven and achieve well in Years 1 and 2 in reading, science and mathematics. Currently standards are below average in Year 6 in all subjects, except PE and music because of the high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties. Pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactorily in other year groups, including the foundation stage. Teaching is good in Years 1 and 2 and mainly satisfactory in other parts of the school. Pupils learn satisfactorily. They enjoy their work but some could apply themselves better and many could take greater pride in the presentation of their work. The recently appointed headteacher provides good leadership. The school is soundly managed with improvements needed in subject leadership. It provides satisfactory value for money.

#### The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The good leadership of the headteacher and her vision for the future of the school;
- Above average standards in reading, mathematics and science by the age of seven in the past two years;
- The good quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2;
- The good relationships between the staff and pupils and amongst the pupils and staff;
- Standards of work in information and communication technology (ICT) in Years 1 to 6 and in science (Years 3 to 6) could be much higher;
- The planning of work in design and technology, art and design, history and geography does not allow the pupils to make the best possible progress in Years 3 to 6;
- Teachers' knowledge of pupils is not always used well enough to match work to pupils' needs and marking is not rigorous enough in helping the pupils improve their work;
- Subject leaders have not been effective enough in monitoring standards and quality of work;
- Pupils do not take enough pride in the general presentation of their written work.

The school has made **satisfactory progress since the last inspection**. Standards are higher in English, science and mathematics at the age of seven. More equipment has been provided for the foundation stage children. There is a greater consistency in record keeping systems and schemes of work provide better guidance for teachers, but further development is needed in some schemes and also in the use of assessment. Information for parents now meets requirements. Satisfactory improvement has been made in independent learning skills, but pupils need more opportunities to investigate for themselves in science in Years 3 to 6. Pupils do not take as much good care with the presentation of their work and in their application to it. There have been some improvements in the provision for ICT but further development is needed. The proportion of good lessons during the inspection was not as high as previously reported.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	D	C	C	C
Mathematics	C	E	C	C
Science	E	E	E	E

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average  
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 6.*

Children in the **foundation stage** reach the expected goals **in all areas of their learning** by the end of the reception year and **achieve satisfactorily**. Pupils in **Years 1 and 2 achieve well in reading, science and mathematics** and often reach above expected standards. **They achieve**

**satisfactorily in writing** and most reach the expected standard. They achieve soundly in other subjects in reaching the expected standard. **Pupils in Years 3 to 6 achieve satisfactorily** and most pupils usually reach the expected level in English and mathematics and in most years do nearly as well as pupils nationally. They do not do as well as them in science, and their achievements in this subject are **unsatisfactory** and test results **well below average**. The current Year 6 class contains an above average percentage of pupils with learning difficulties. These pupils mainly achieve satisfactorily but overall standards are **below average** in most subjects. It is well below average in science and their achievement is unsatisfactory. They reach expectations in music and physical education.

**Attendance and punctuality are good.** Pupils relate well to one another. They adopt **satisfactory attitudes** when they tackle their work. Pupils do not always apply themselves well and they can be noisy during their activities.

### **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The overall quality of education provided is satisfactory. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory.** It is **good** for their moral and social development. **Teaching is satisfactory overall and good in the infants.** Teachers do not match the work to the pupils' capabilities enough at times. The teachers have good relationships with the pupils but the atmosphere is often too cosy which affects the rigour of work. **The curriculum is satisfactory.** Some improvements are necessary in the planning of some subjects. There is **good** provision for extra-curricular activities. The school takes **satisfactory care of the pupils.** It has a **good partnership with the parents and the community**, especially with other schools.

### **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The overall **leadership and management of the school are satisfactory.** The recently appointed headteacher provides **good** leadership with a clear understanding of how the school needs to improve. The effectiveness of subject leaders has been **unsatisfactory** in the main because they have not had enough guidance and opportunities in undertaking their roles. The work of the governing body is **satisfactory.** Management of the school is **satisfactory.**

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

**Parents hold very positive views of the school** and state that their children are making good progress. Most pupils feel they work hard and find work interesting and fun.

### **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Improve standards of work in ICT throughout the school and science in Years 3 to 6;
- Improve the quality of whole school planning for the curriculum in art and design, design and technology, history and geography so pupils make better progress;
- Make better use of assessment to match the work to pupils' needs and improve the quality of marking so it helps the pupils with their next steps in learning;
- Define the role of the subject leaders and make sure they carry it out;
- Ensure pupils take a much greater pride in the general presentation of their written work.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Pupils achieve **well** in Years 1 and 2 and **satisfactorily** in other parts of the school. Standards in some aspects of work in Year 2, including mathematics and English are **above average**. Standards of work in Year 6 are mainly **below expectations**, including writing mainly due to the above average proportion of pupils with learning difficulties. Their reading skills are average. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language achieve as well as other pupils. More capable pupils achieve **satisfactorily**. Pupils' skills in ICT by age 11 **are below average**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in reading, mathematics and science at the end of Year 2 are above average;
  - Pupils with English as an additional language achieve well;
  - Standards in the current Year 6 are below expectations in most subjects;
  - There has been a long history of below average performance in science in national tests at age 11 and standards in this subject remain depressed in Years 3 to 6;
  - Pupils' skills in the use of ICT are not well developed.
- 1 Children enter the school at age four with below average attainment for this age, particularly in their linguistic ability, personal and social development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. They achieve soundly in most aspects of their development in the foundation stage and make good progress in their communication, language and literacy skills. By the start of Year 1, most pupils have reached the expected goals for children of this age.
  - 2 The performances of the pupils in national tests at the end of Years 2 and 6 have fluctuated over the past few years. In the main, however, pupils have been achieving comparatively better at the end of Year 2 against other pupils than at the end of Year 6. More capable pupils have been reaching the higher levels at both the end of Year 2 and Year 6, but only two Year 6 pupils reached the higher level in writing in 2003.
  - 3 Year 2 boys have not been doing as well as boys nationally in writing until recently and the average performance of both boys and girls in mathematics in recent years has been lower than that of boys and girls nationally. In the last two years, their levels of attainment have picked up significantly and are now above average in reading, mathematics and science. Year 6 pupils have been reaching levels slightly below boys and girls nationally in English and mathematics in the past few years but in science their performance has been well below average. The most recent results show more Year 6 pupils reaching the higher level in science, almost one-quarter of the pupils.
  - 4 Currently pupils in Year 2 are making good progress in reading, science and mathematics and they achieve well. Most are expected to reach the expected levels by age seven in these aspects of their work and significant percentages the higher level. The percentage of pupils expected to reach the higher level in writing is not expected to be as high, although most pupils should reach the expected level. This is because pupils' skills in their handwriting and in the use of writing across the curriculum are not well developed enough. Overall, pupils achieve well in English in Years 1 and 2 and make some good gains in their speaking skills, although listening skills are not as well developed.
  - 5 Pupils achieve satisfactorily in English in Years 3 to 6. By Year 6, most pupils show satisfactory speaking and listening skills but handwriting standards and the presentation of work are unsatisfactory. Whilst reading standards by age 11 are mostly in line with expectations, pupils do not use writing across the curriculum enough and too much of their work is copied from other sources. Writing standards in Year 6 are currently well below average. The standard of their work in science is well below expectations and, in the main,

their achievement in this subject unsatisfactory. Pupils do not investigate enough for themselves and their subject knowledge is not sufficiently secure.

- 6 Pupils' attainment in ICT reaches the expected level by the end of Year 2. It is below expectations by the end of Year 6. There has been a lack of resources and software for this age group and there have been gaps in the provision for them. Cross-curricular application has been weak. Consequently the pupils have not developed the skills required of 11-year-olds in this subject.
- 7 Whilst the achievements of the pupils in Years 1 and 2 have been satisfactory in history and geography and most pupils have reached the expected level by age seven, they have been unsatisfactory in these subjects by age 11. The attainment of the current groups of Year 6 pupils is below average. For similar reasons, there are differences in the attainment between Years 2 and 6 pupils in design and technology and art and design with the Year 2 pupils reaching the expectations for their age and Year 6 pupils' work being below the expected standards.
- 8 Pupils' attainment in physical education and music reaches the expected level in both Years 2 and 6. They achieve soundly. Their enthusiasm in physical education is encouraged by a good number of extra-curricular activities that enhances their skills in different sports and athletic activities.
- 9 Pupils with special educational needs make the expected progress commensurate with their ability and against the targets in their individual education plans. Pupils with English as an additional language make similar rates of progress to the other pupils. This represents good achievement. Pupils from minority ethnic groups make similar rates of progress to the other pupils. More capable pupils achieve satisfactorily.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	17.1 (17.1)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	15.1 (14.5)	14.4 (14.3)
Mathematics	16.9 (16.8)	16.5 (16.2)

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

**Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2002**

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.0 (26.8)	27.0 (27.0)
Mathematics	27.4 (25.0)	26.7 (26.6)
Science	26.6 (25.4)	28.3 (28.3)

*There were 32 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

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

Attendance and punctuality are **good** and children enjoy school. They show an interest in all that the school has to offer. Behaviour is generally **satisfactory**, although some classes can be noisy. No bullying or racial disharmony was seen. Pupils' attitudes to their work are **satisfactory** and **good** towards one another. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Above average levels of attendance and good levels of punctuality;
  - Pupils are supportive of one another and relationships amongst them are good;
  - The good provision for pupils' moral and social development;
- 10 Children enjoy school and this is supported by information from the parents. Attendance has remained good and pupils are punctual for school. Procedures for following up absences are very effective. Registration is quick and efficient enabling pupils to settle down quickly to work.
- 11 The majority of the pupils, including those in the foundation stage, are enthusiastic to learn and behaviour is satisfactory overall, although pupils can be noisy in lessons. Behaviour out of class is good, and any difficulties or poor behaviour are quickly and kindly dealt with. At times the older pupils are encouraged to find out information about their studies for themselves and this helps to develop their confidence and independence. All pupils are expected to take some responsibility. The older pupils look after the younger ones and all pupils show a concern for one another. Discussion with the pupils shows that pupils appreciate their teachers and they state that they give them much help. The pupils take pride in their school buildings and grounds, which are free from litter and graffiti. The pupils are involved in drawing up school rules and they feel an ownership of them as a result. This encourages the pupils to keep the rules. Pupils feel that behaviour has improved in the past year and that there is no bullying or inequality. There have been no exclusions. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included in the life of the school. They are very well supported in the caring atmosphere within the school.
- 12 The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall. The provision for moral and social development has continued to be good since the last inspection and the pupils understand the rights and wrongs of different issues. The school sets good standards in its values and the pupils understand what is expected. Pupils relate well to one another and speak with adults with respect. They have good opportunities for different social activities, which include visits to the theatre and museums, other places of historical and geographical interest and a residential visit in Year 6. Overall, the provision for the cultural and spiritual aspects of the pupils' development is satisfactory in both respects. There are good links with an African school for which the pupils collect such items as pencils, paints and paper. An African week has been planned for the summer term. However, not enough is done to help pupils appreciate that they live in a multi-cultural society. Pupils collect money for specific charities and this helps them think of others less fortunate than themselves. Pupils are encouraged in the Christian faith and assemblies and times for prayer feature regularly in the school week. The spiritual dimension of pupils' development is not planned with sufficient thought in the general curriculum provided.

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

Authorised absence	
School data	5.1
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.0
National data	0.5

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

**Exclusions None**

**Ethnic background of pupils**

**Exclusions in the last school year**

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Black or Black British – Caribbean
No ethnic group recorded

No of pupils on roll
168
3
11
1
1
1

Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0

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

**QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

**Teaching and learning**

The quality of teaching is **satisfactory** overall and **good** in Years 1 and 2. It is **satisfactory** in the foundation stage. The use of assessment to inform future learning is **unsatisfactory**. Pupils' learning is **satisfactory** overall. They enjoy their work but many could develop a better work ethic, engage more productively in their learning and take an increased pride in what they do.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The teachers in Years 1 and 2 are very effective and their pupils make good progress;
- The relationships the staff have with the pupils enable the pupils to enjoy their learning;
- Resources are used well to facilitate pupils' understanding;
- Assessment is not developed enough and insufficient use is made of the information about pupils' progress that is available; marking does not help pupils to improve their work enough.
- Teachers' planning is not sharp enough in detailing progress in learning and in planning activities that match the capabilities of different pupils;
- The atmosphere in classes can be too relaxed and does not always enable the pupils to make the best possible progress;
- Teaching assistants are not deployed effectively enough.

**Commentary**

- 13 Whilst the overall quality of teaching observed was not as good as at the time of the previous inspection, the teaching in Years 1 and 2 is a strength of the school. These teachers have very good relationships with their pupils and speak to them in language that the pupils can

understand. This enables the pupils to comprehend the lesson content. Instructions for pupil activities are clear and pupils begin work quickly. These teachers match the work well to pupils' capabilities. The good teaching in Years 1 and 2 enables the pupils to make good progress in several aspects of their learning and to achieve well, particularly in reading, mathematics and science. Substantial numbers of pupils reach the higher level in these aspects of their studies.

- 14 Teachers have good relationships with their pupils. Pupils contribute confidently in lessons, although sometimes pupils are not encouraged to contribute enough. They sit back and let others do the thinking. The good relationships are reflected in the pupils' own attitudes to one another and so they co-operate well in group and team work and discuss matters amicably, although sometimes excitedly.
- 15 Teachers make good use of resources, although there are some notable shortages, for example globes in geography. This good use of resources helps the pupils to understand the work they engage in as when they develop an appreciation of decimals in Year 6 and when they learn to appreciate the value of numbers in different positions in Years 2 and 3. In science, Year 3 pupils made good progress in understanding the relationship between the distance of the light source from an object and the size of the shadow because of the good provision of torches, screens and objects.
- 16 Teachers do not make enough use of pupils' success and difficulties in previous lessons before they plan future work. Too much similar work is given to the whole class in some subjects, such as geography, history and ICT. In science, pupils frequently copy wording or fill in gaps and do not make enough use of English for themselves. This is one of the factors that causes the overall below average quality of writing by age 11. In mathematics, lower attaining pupils are sometimes over-challenged because the work is not well matched to their capabilities and they struggle as a result. Marking is up to date but teachers' comments do not alert the pupils enough about what they need to do to improve. Marking is sometimes rushed and inaccurate in mathematics. There is no systematic correction policy in mathematics. The pupils are not being helped enough and teachers' expectations of the quality of the presentation of work are too low. Pupils are prepared to submit untidy work and they get away with it.
- 17 Teachers' planning is not sharp enough in detailing activities that match the capabilities of different pupils. The long-term plans in geography, history, art and design and design and technology in Years 3 to 6 are not helpful enough to the teachers when they plan progression in the work. As a result, the structure of work in these subjects adversely affects skill development. This leads to some unsatisfactory progress in these subjects. The learning intentions in the group activities in English and mathematics are not clear enough. The conclusion to lessons is too often merely a review of some of the examples that the pupils have worked on rather than consolidating general principles or taking the next steps forward in learning. Teachers make satisfactory use of homework in helping pupils to improve their English and mathematics work but parents state there is some inconsistency in its provision.
- 18 The good relationships that the teachers have with the pupils can be a 'double-edged sword'. At times the pupils are too leisurely in their approach to their work and the atmosphere is too cosy. As a result, the pupils can chat during their assigned activities and the amount they complete, the quality and the accuracy of what they do are sometimes affected adversely.
- 19 Teaching assistants are not deployed effectively in the school. They are sometimes observers to music or physical education lessons and their talents could be deployed more effectively elsewhere. During lesson discussion times, they frequently sit passively on the outside of the group whilst the class teacher is leading the session. Some good practice was seen in Year 2 where the teaching assistant spoke quietly with the special educational needs group, checked that they understood and encouraged them to answer.

- 20 Teachers cater well for pupils with English as an additional language and these pupils make good progress. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. It is good in small group situations. However, class teachers do not plan sufficiently to meet the needs of all pupils, especially those in the early stages of special needs. The support for pupils on the latter stages of special needs is good. Pupils from minority ethnic groups are fully included in lessons.

### **Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 42 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	1 (2%)	15 (36%)	25 (60%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

### **The curriculum**

The curriculum is **satisfactory** in its breadth but **unsatisfactory** in some aspects of its planning. There are **good** opportunities for enrichment, particularly in sport. The accommodation and provision of learning resources and books are **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The good range of extra-curricular activities;
- The large site, attractive grounds, and new building development planned;
- The Year 6 residential visit and taster courses in French and German enhance the overall curriculum provision;
- Resources for ICT are unreliable and there are weaknesses in their use and in the organisation of the timetable for this subject;
- The curriculum in history, geography, art and design and design and technology does not build up pupils' skills sequentially;
- There is not enough use of ICT in other subjects;
- Some resources in the reception class are old and the adjacent outdoor area is underdeveloped.

### **Commentary**

- 21 The previous report judged the curriculum to be satisfactory, with a high proportion of time allocated to English and mathematics. The curriculum has been maintained and is satisfactory, including the foundation stage for the youngest children in the school. However, some schemes of work, for example in art and design and geography, do not ensure pupils' skills develop sequentially. There is a satisfactory breadth to the range of curriculum opportunities offered and these are enriched through sporting activities and after school clubs. The range of extra-curricular activities outside school hours is good. These include different sports, knitting, gardening, dance, science, computers and art. Sport features highly in the life of the school. The pupils attend sporting events with other local schools, and there are after-school activities in football, netball and rounders. Taster courses in French and German help prepare pupils for the secondary stage of education.
- 22 The accommodation and resources in the school are adequate overall, although some resources in reception are well worn and rather shabby. The accommodation is satisfactory and generally the outdoor facilities are good, although the outdoor area adjacent to the reception class is underdeveloped. Learning resources have been improved since the last inspection and are adequate overall. However, the lack of a computer room, problems with unreliable resources and the deployment of them have affected adversely the curriculum for

information and communication technology. Some improvements have already been made to the buildings, and there are plans to continue this work, with the addition of a new classroom and an ICT suite. There are satisfactory policies for most subjects, but some, for example in ICT, are not sufficiently up-to-date. The strategies for the teaching of literacy and numeracy are satisfactory overall, with some links to other subjects, but the use of ICT to support learning, for example in history, is as yet underdeveloped. Pupils are included fairly in curriculum opportunities but in some lessons higher attaining pupils are not always challenged sufficiently well and in mathematics, less capable pupils are sometimes given work that is too difficult. In general, however, the provision for pupils identified, as having special educational needs is satisfactory.

- 23 There is a sufficient range of relevant activities and initiatives to promote the pupils' personal, social and health development, including sex and relationships education and drugs awareness. Until recently, however, the school has not had a scheme of work for this aspect. Lessons were based on a health programme. The school has now adopted a commercial scheme to teach personal, social and health education and will keep this under review. The programme includes sex education for older pupils, raising awareness of health and safety issues and there are plans to introduce a school council. There is satisfactory equality of opportunity in this provision, as outlined in the policies for equality of opportunity and racial equality. The induction procedures for the youngest children in the school and when pupils transfer to secondary school are good.

### Care, guidance and support

Overall, the school makes **satisfactory** arrangements to ensure the pupils' care, welfare, health and safety and the involvement of pupils' views in the school's organisation. It provides **satisfactory** provision of support, advice and guidance based on monitoring the pupils' work.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff know the pupils well and pupils are confident to approach the staff with any concerns;
- Child protection arrangements are good;
- The links with other schools are effective in sharing problems and taking on new initiatives;
- There are some health and safety issues to be addressed;
- The pupils are not as well informed as they might be about how they can improve their work.

### Commentary

- 24 Pupils are satisfactorily cared for. Staff know the pupils well and have a genuine concern for their care, health and welfare. Pupils are confident to approach the staff with any questions. Some issues pertaining to health and safety have been brought to the attention of the headteacher. She is already aware of these matters and is dealing with them through the governing body. It is anticipated that a new building programme will help resolve several of these issues. The designated person responsible for child protection has had appropriate training and the staff is well briefed about procedures to be followed.
- 25 The school liaises well with other professionals to enable pupils to receive the help and support needed for their different circumstances. Occupational therapists, for example, have advised the school in carrying out programmes to help pupils with co-ordination difficulties in their movements. Teaching assistants supervise these exercises with the pupils efficiently. Speakers from outside visit to discuss issues about drugs, sex education and other relevant topics with the pupils. Relationships are good throughout the school enabling pupils to develop confidence and independence.
- 26 The school has good induction arrangements for new pupils and parents are well informed about the school's procedures. There is an open door policy and all parents are welcome at

any time to discuss concerns they may have or talk about the progress their children are making. Arrangements when pupils transfer to secondary school are effective. Many pupils in Year 6 visit the secondary school during their final year to participate in activities. There are good links with other schools for sport, which enables cross-school friendships to develop.

- 27 There are satisfactory arrangements for pupils to know about the progress they are making. Targets are being sharpened up so the pupils are more aware of what they need to do to improve. Currently marking is not sufficiently helpful to assist the pupils in knowing how they can improve.
- 28 Questionnaires are used to assess the pupils' views and the setting up of a school council is being considered. Internet access is monitored effectively. Equal opportunities are acknowledged and practised in the school and there is a wide variety of activities, all of which, including football, are open to both boys and girls.

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

The links between parents and school are **good** and also with the pre-school group, nearby primary schools, other educational establishments, the church and the Local Education Authority.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The links and communication between school and parents;
  - Links with other educational establishments;
  - The work of the Parents, Teachers and Friends' Association.
- 29 The school maintains good links with parents and the parents' questionnaire, parents' meeting and discussions with them endorse this. Parents are welcomed in the school and are well informed in verbal and through written information, including a parents' notice board. Special information evenings about aspects of the curriculum are arranged for parents as required. Relationships are good. It is a very sensitive school, ensuring pupils receive help if needed. Parents are aware of the homework set for the pupils, and the majority of pupils feel the right amount is set. Some parents help in school and also accompany pupils on school trips. A welcome is given for parents to attend school assembly, particularly the weekly 'celebration assembly' when pupils are awarded 'the star of the week'. There is an opportunity to meet more formally each term to discuss their children's' work and progress with the teachers.
- 30 The lively Parents, Teachers and Friends' Association raises a significant amount of money for the school, as well as arranging social events for the families of pupils who attend. Its success is evidenced by recent purchases of a digital projector and white boards in the classrooms.
- 31 Secondary school pupils have an opportunity to carry out work experience and links with teacher training establishments facilitate trainee teacher placements in the school. Year 6 pupils visit the secondary school and the transfer arrangements work well. The induction for children to the reception class is planned carefully and close contact with the parents is maintained. There are good links with other head teachers and schools and learning assistants from a special school have been invited to visit the school. Good links are maintained between the school and parents of pupils with special educational needs.
- 32 Appropriate contact is made with other professions to help in the whole development of the pupils. The priest from the local Catholic Church has close contact, although the links with the diocese have been more tenuous. There is a satisfactory link with a local industrial company.

### **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management in the school are **satisfactory**. The leadership of the headteacher is **good**. The organisation and implementation of the role of subject leaders have been **unsatisfactory**. Management systems are **satisfactory** overall but school administration is good. The governance of the school is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has a clear vision of the kind of school she wants and of the education to be provided;
- The administrative section is very efficient;
- Subject leaders have not been sufficiently dynamic in moving forward the school's work.

### Commentary

- 33 The governing body takes a good level of interest in the school's work. It is suitably organised and is supportive of the school. It is led well by its chair and fulfils its statutory duties. It has a good understanding of the school's strengths but largely relies on the senior management for development initiatives. It is not yet at a stage where it brings forward areas for development on the school improvement plan itself or questions the school's work incisively. Members visit the school but they like to be guided by the headteacher on the area of focus for the visits. They are not yet at a stage where members challenge what is happening sufficiently.
- 34 The overall leadership of the school is satisfactory. That of the headteacher, just beginning her second year, is good. She has a very clear sense of direction and philosophy and has written a detailed school improvement plan with relevant priorities for action and this is of good quality. In this she has involved the staff to good effect in determining the priorities. She has gained the respect of the staff and parents and they recognise her good leadership qualities. She is supported by a caring deputy head, who does much to maintain the good quality of work in the infant section, and a welcoming, committed and efficient administrative staff who help maintain the school 's administrative systems and contribute much to the happy school atmosphere.
- 35 The management of the school is satisfactory overall, but the leadership of staff with subject responsibilities has been unsatisfactory. Changes have recently been made to several of these through new staff appointments and swaps between others so that they can be more effective. In the past, subject leaders have not been rigorous enough in monitoring standards, increasing pupils' achievements, reviewing practice and making improvements. They have not been supportively critical to help each other to become better practitioners. There are signs of improvement and the action plans they have initiated indicate that they know what needs to be done.
- 36 The management and leadership of special educational needs are satisfactory. The special educational needs co-ordinator has too little time for administration and for supporting teachers in their teaching of pupils on the early stages of special needs. Insufficient distinction is made between low attaining pupils, who are the responsibility of the class teacher, and those with special needs. The use and training of the teaching assistants should be reviewed to ensure that they have the skills to meet the learning needs of individual pupils.
- 37 The recent involvement of staff in the school improvement plan has been a valuable initiative as it has brought about a common view of the school's priorities for development. Increasingly test results are informing this plan and recently there has been a more incisive examination of test results to inform future action than hitherto. Performance management systems have been satisfactory and included one common target for all staff but the school recognises that the other objectives agreed with individual teachers to improve their work need to be more sharply focused.

- 38 New staff have been inducted effectively. Staff have adequate opportunities for further professional training and, in its turn, the school provides places for trainee teachers. The workload of staff is satisfactorily managed but the teaching assistants are not always being deployed to make best use of their skills. The recruitment of permanent staff is difficult and restricts the choice when making new appointments but the school has a regular band of supply teachers for emergency cover.
- 39 Financial procedures are well managed by the administrative staff and the most recent audit report (2002) reported satisfactorily on the school's systems. Most recommendations have been fulfilled. The school recognises the need to fulfil the remaining recommendation to have an assets review. The school seeks best value when ordering supplies and when undertaking major works.
- 40 Recruitment difficulties, the school's accommodation and the lack of ICT resources and teaching space for lessons in ICT have been the major barriers getting in the way of raising achievement. Additionally the lack of rigorous schemes of work in art and design, design and technology, history and geography is preventing a structured approach to teaching and affecting overall standards. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

**Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003**

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	425, 773
Total expenditure	426,906
Expenditure per pupil	2,113

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	19,743
Balance carried forward to the next	18,609

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

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

The provision for the children in the foundation stage is **satisfactory** overall.

- 41 Children come into the school with a wide range of abilities, but are generally below average overall, especially in their linguistic ability and, knowledge and understanding of the world. A few are still quite immature in their social and emotional skills. The standards the children reach in the different areas of learning are similar to those reported previously.

### **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **satisfactory** overall.

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

- Staff are sensitive and positive in their relationships with pupils;
- Children's personal and social skills are immature;
- The balance of adult-directed and child-initiated activities does not encourage the children to concentrate and persevere.

#### **Commentary**

- 42 Children's skills in personal, social and emotional development are below average when they first start in the reception class. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with good levels of interaction from staff. The children achieve satisfactorily and although their levels of attainment are below average, they are learning how to co-operate and behave appropriately with others. Due to the positive input from staff, the children begin to learn how to share and take turns. Those children who find this more difficult are carefully reminded to be fair. Most children are expected to reach the recommended goals in this area of learning by the start of Year 1. There are activities which help the children to concentrate and persevere. However, the balance is too much skewed to those they are directed to compared to those they choose themselves for these skills to be improved further. Some activities, however, such as the 'Bear Hunt' and using small hammer and pin tacks to make pictures using two-dimensional shapes, have already proved successful in building the children's ability to concentrate for longer periods of time. Generally, the children's behaviour is satisfactory overall. Some children, who are learning to deal with their strong impulses and emotions, are managed sensitively by the staff to ensure they respect others and learn to negotiate and co-operate with them. Some resources and toys reflect other cultures and the children are learning to show respect, understanding and tolerance of others.

### **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

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

- Good teaching, good levels of interaction;
- Staff's good subject knowledge in promoting these skills;
- Good opportunities to encourage writing and mark-making;
- Role-play is under developed.

## Commentary

- 43 The teaching of communication, language and literacy is good overall. Children come into school with skills in language which are slightly below average. The good input they receive means they are making good progress and achieving well towards the goals at the end of the reception year. Most children are expected to reach the expectations for children aged five. Several children are developing their ideas about words and the sounds, which form these. They are still learning to listen attentively. Many children find this difficult as they settle in school and they are still learning how to participate in conversation, especially in discussions in larger groups. There are some opportunities for rôle-play, but these are underdeveloped at present. The area for imaginative play is not sufficiently inspiring or attractive to help the children develop their ideas and stories. The children have satisfactory skills using their hands, which means their attempts at writing and making marks and symbols are successful. They have some good opportunities to practise these in incidental activities. Many children can identify some of the letters in their own names and are beginning to form these correctly, sometimes using correctly upper and lower case letters.

## MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good encouragement from staff to develop ideas about numbers;
- Some children already have quite secure skills in mathematical development;
- Not enough variety of activities to support learning about pattern and shape, through creative work.

## Commentary

- 44 This area of learning is taught satisfactorily. The children's levels of attainment when they come into school are about average in this area of learning and by the time the children leave their reception year, most will achieve the goals for children of this age in their mathematical development. The children achieve satisfactorily. A few children in the class can already count accurately to ten and beyond. Most can count with some support and are beginning to recognise numerals to ten correctly and beginning to put them in correct order. They are also beginning to use mathematical language correctly to describe groups of objects and to describe two-dimensional shapes. The staff help the children to understand mathematics in their environment, through counting the number of children in a group, singing number songs and rhymes and counting toys and other objects as they play. Pattern making work is securely developed through creative opportunities, using colour and shapes, but these could be developed further through an increasing range and variety of materials and activities.

## KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **satisfactory** overall.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's good skills in using information and communication technology;
- The good expertise of staff which is being used well to promote the use of technology to support learning;
- Not enough opportunities to observe natural life and objects;
- The under-development of the outdoor area and its use;
- Not enough range and variety of materials for model-making activities.

## Commentary

- 45 The children's knowledge and understanding of the world around them is below average overall when they first start school. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and the children achieve satisfactorily in this area of learning. They already have quite secure skills in using technology to support their learning. The children use computer keyboards confidently and their skills in using the mouse are developing well. The staff are adept at providing good experiences for the children to build on these skills. The children acquire a sound awareness of how things work and why they happen, and through work on growth and considering themselves as babies, they begin to understand the process of change. However, there are limited experiences for the children to explore nature and natural materials, and the outdoor area to promote this type of work is underdeveloped. The children develop satisfactory construction skills, but they do not have a wide enough range of accessible materials and tools from which to select to develop their own designs and skills. They explore their new learning environment and develop an increasing sense of place, location and direction and acquire a sense of community and their place within this.

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's developing skills in hand control;
- The spaciousness of their surroundings both indoors, in the school hall and outside;
- The lack of apparatus to practise climbing and jumping;
- The outdoor area is not developed fully to promote physical skills.

## Commentary

- 46 The quality of teaching in physical development is satisfactory. The children achieve at a satisfactory level from an average level of attainment when they start school. They are expected to reach the goals in this area of learning by the start of Year 1. They develop at a satisfactory rate and move with confidence and increasing bodily control. They use the bikes with satisfactory skill outdoors to push, and propel themselves along, negotiating obstacles, space and other children. The range of equipment for the children to develop their physical skills has been improved since the previous inspection, but there is still no climbing frame of the correct size for the children to practise climbing and jumping. They use the school hall to good effect to develop physical pursuits and acquire satisfactory balancing and scrambling skills. They develop their hand control skills well, through the well provided opportunities for the children to practise holding pencils, crayons and other implements for drawing and cutting.

## CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's attempts in art work are valued and respected;
- Not enough access for the children to an increasing range of materials and media to explore in creative work;
- Not enough development of imaginative play situations;
- Insufficiently attractive resources to support this type of work.

## Commentary

- 47 The children's creative development is being taught satisfactorily. The children's levels of attainment are average and they are achieving at a satisfactory level. Most children should reach the expectations for the end of the reception year. Creative work in the reception class is valued and the children's work is displayed proudly. Their initial attempts at using paint and other media have produced attractive displays of flamboyant 'birthday cakes' each depicting four candles and they have made handprints to create patterns. However, the area of the classroom for this type of work is not especially accessible for the children so that they can use a variety of materials and explore, design and make their own drawings, painting and models. The children have below average skills in making music and little experience of using musical instruments. Despite this, they enjoy these activities, sing with enthusiasm and gusto and handle instruments properly to make different sounds and effects. Imaginative play is being developed satisfactorily, although some opportunities are missed to extend role-play, especially with the support of an adult. However, the 'Bear Hunt' activity during the inspection presented the children with good opportunities to re-tell stories and develop their ideas and imagination.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

### ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory** overall. It is **good** in Years 1 and 2.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is good and the pupils achieve well in this part of the school;
- Assessments are not used effectively to meet the learning needs of all pupils;
- Teachers' marking is inconsistent and teachers do not encourage pupils to take enough pride in their work;
- The use of homework is inconsistent and lacks challenge.

## Commentary

- 48 Some improvement has been made in English at the end of Year 2 since the last inspection and much better progress made in writing in the last year. By the end of Year 2, overall standards are at least in line with those expected. They are above average in reading and a high proportion of pupils now reach the expected level in writing. Standards of work over time have been broadly similar to those of the last inspection at the end of Year 6 but the large percentage of Year 6 pupils with learning difficulties is reflected in the current well below average standards at age 11. Throughout the school girls do better than the boys in English.
- 49 Pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactorily in Years 3-6. Higher attaining pupils, minority ethnic groups who speak English as their first language and those with special educational needs make similar rates of progress to other pupils in relation to their capabilities. Pupils with English as an additional language achieve well.
- 50 Pupils make satisfactory progress in their speaking and listening skills. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make good gains in their speaking skills because they build up their confidence through role-play and drama and the teachers regularly engage the pupils in conversation. In Years 3-6, pupils speak well and use grammar correctly. Most pupils develop their spoken thoughts and ideas effectively when prompted by the teacher. Lower attaining pupils are more reluctant to join in conversation, except when they are engaged in one-to-one conversation. In Years 3-6, speaking is encouraged through paired and small group assignments, which work effectively, but the opportunities for pupils to speak to a large group are limited. Pupils throughout the school show satisfactory listening skills when they listen to their teachers or to each other.

- 51 The overall standards in reading are satisfactory. Whilst above average in Years 1 and 2, they are average in Years 3-6. From an early age, pupils enjoy reading and are confident readers. They progress from early reading texts, gaining a good knowledge of letter sounds and the ability to discover the meaning of words from their context. In Years 1 and 2, regular reading records are shared by the teacher, pupil and parent and this sharing contributes to the good development of pupils' reading in those years. The encouragement for pupils to read in Years 3 to 6 is not as pronounced and they do not maintain the same rate of progress as in Years 1 and 2. Pupils in these year groups, for example, are not expected to review their reading nor record their likes and dislikes about the books they read. Consequently, older pupils express a limited range of preferences in their reading choices. Nevertheless, older pupils are confident when locating information in non-fiction texts, but less so when using information from the Internet or when combining information from several texts to use in their own research.
- 52 Spelling is generally satisfactory throughout the school but standards in handwriting are unsatisfactory overall. In Years 1 and 2 pupils develop a clear and legible handwriting with higher attaining pupils developing a cursive script. However, as the pupils get older less attention is paid to the quality of writing and its presentation. Narrative and descriptive writing is well taught in Years 1 and 2. In Years 3-6, pupils have fewer opportunities to write for different purposes and do not develop enough confidence in a range of writing styles. Teachers do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to write for themselves across all the subjects of the curriculum.
- 53 Teaching is satisfactory overall. It is good in Years 1 and 2 because of the well planned teaching and the interesting activities that interest the pupils and satisfactory in Years 3-6. The good relationships and good level of personal consideration within classes set a pleasant atmosphere for learning. However, teachers in the main do not use available assessment data sufficiently well to inform their lessons, match the work to different needs and so ensure that pupils of all abilities learn effectively. Teaching assistants are not used well enough to support the learning of individual pupils. Whilst teachers have high expectation of pupils' behaviour, they do not have similar expectations for the quality of written work and presentation. Marking is often rudimentary and does not help pupils to take pride in their work. Pupils are not always clear about what they can do to improve their work. The use of homework to support pupils in their learning is inconsistent and often lacks challenge.
- 54 The leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory because the role of co-ordinators has not been securely defined. Standards have not been scrutinised sufficiently, particularly in Years 3 to 6. As a result, the poor quality of presentation has gone unnoticed.

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

- 55 There are generally satisfactory opportunities for pupils to use English across the curriculum, although sometimes pupils copy wording from different sources. In religious education pupils are encouraged to write reflectively as well as in narrative. In history pupils write narratives and reports. However, more could be done to ensure that the quality of this writing is consistent across all subjects and that pupils are clear that consistent standards are expected in their written work. Opportunities are lost for extending vocabulary in geography and for pupils to write in their own words in science. Older pupils are not challenged enough in their choices of reading both generally and within their areas of study in different subjects.

## MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The progress pupils make in Years 1 and 2;
- Insufficient use of investigation in, and application of, mathematics;
- The work is not matched well enough for the pupils who are not as capable as others;
- Presentation of work is not of a high enough quality.

### Commentary

- 56 Standards in mathematics have been maintained since the last inspection. In 2003, almost one half of Year 2 pupils reached the higher level in the national tests, an improvement on the previous year. The school exceeded its target. This represents good achievement from an average attainment in mathematics on entry to the school. Almost one-third of the pupils reached the higher level at the end of Year 6, despite two absentees affecting the overall result. This indicates satisfactory achievement from the beginning of Year 3, although the ambitious target was not reached. Pupils continue to make good progress in mathematics in Year 2 and similar numbers of pupils to 2003 are likely to reach the expected and higher levels at the end of the academic year. Pupils achieve satisfactorily by the end of Year 6. However, the attainment of the current Year 6 pupils is below average because of the high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties.
- 57 By age seven, pupils develop good skills in their knowledge of number and in naming two-dimensional shapes because of the good match of work to pupils' capabilities. They acquire a good understanding of place value in tens and units. Year 2 pupils show good skill in applying their multiplication knowledge to money calculations. Whilst the more capable pupils are often given suitably challenging work in Years 3 to 6, less capable pupils are often brought to a point of failure because they do not fully understand the work they are given to do.
- 58 Pupils have regular opportunities to undertake mathematical activities but there is a skew towards number work and a heavy reliance on text books and workbooks throughout the school. Not enough attention is being given to applying mathematics to real life situations and to investigation in mathematics and so pupils' skills are not as strong in these aspects as in number. Insufficient use is made of ICT in mathematics. The routine of lessons does not allow for enough excitement in the exploration of mathematics.
- 59 The teaching of mathematics is satisfactory overall and often good in Years 1 and 2. Most lessons observed during the inspection throughout the school were of satisfactory quality, with some good features in Year 2, such as the use of practical situations to develop accuracy in adding numbers together and good use of mathematical language. The end of Year 2 lessons is often used well to draw conclusions about what the pupils have been learning.
- 60 Lessons have a good structure but the time devoted to the different elements is not always well balanced. Teachers' planning is not sharp enough in indicating the particular objectives for different groups of pupils and how the different parts of the mathematics lesson are to be used. This is because assessment is not used enough in planning the next stages of learning and not getting to the heart of the pupils' thinking when they undertake their tasks. Mental sessions in Years 3 to 6 are not focused enough on helping pupils to develop mental strategies for working answers out. Lessons seen in the juniors occasionally contained some unsatisfactory features, such as mental starters, which were merely tests of multiplication knowledge and asked of all pupils. Pupils with English as an additional language and minority ethnic groups are fully included in lessons. They make similar rates of progress as the other pupils. Pupils try reasonably hard with their tasks but sometimes chat too much and lose their

focus. Their presentation skills vary considerably between classes and there is not yet a consistency of expectation in how they set out their work and in the use of rulers. Work can appear untidy and lacks a sense of pride and there is not a thorough system to deal with work when pupils work on loose-leaf sheets. There is no coherent system for pupils to undertake corrections when they have made mistakes.

- 61 Subject leadership and management are satisfactory but is in need of further development. Some useful analysis of national test results has taken place but there is not enough reference material for comparative purposes to help the teachers in levelling the quality of pupils' work.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

- 62 Satisfactory use is made of mathematics across the curriculum, for example when pupils draw graphs of their results in science and when they order the sequence of events they study in date order in history. Insufficient use is made of computer software programs in mathematics.

### **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good** in Years 1 and 2 and **unsatisfactory** in Years 3 to 6.

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

- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make good progress in this subject;
- There is a history of well below average performance by age 11 in science in national tests;
- Expectations are not high enough in Key Stage 2 and the pupils in Years 3 to 6 do not make enough progress. Their achievements are unsatisfactory and attainment is below average;
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to investigate for themselves in Years 3 to 6 and their written work is unsatisfactory;
- The science policy is weak and does not provide enough guidance for the staff.

#### **Commentary**

- 63 Standards in science have fallen by the age of 11 since the last inspection but they have improved by the end of Year 2. Pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2 and achieve well. Results of teacher assessments at the end of Year 2 show that pupils do well in the National Curriculum Programmes of Study for their age. They show a good understanding of what they do and results are above average. This is because they have good opportunities to work practically. They learn to predict from an early age, for example deciding where in their classroom a block of ice will melt quickest, but prediction is not always a sufficiently regular feature of their work. The wide range of science topics meets National Curriculum requirements effectively and gives the pupils a good base of learning in the subject. Pupils occasionally make good use of mathematics, as when they make graphs of their favourite foods when considering healthy eating. They look carefully and label their diagrams. They learn to recognise features of a fair test and know that it is not a fair test when, as part of an investigation, they all push in different ways. Most current Year 2 pupils are expected to reach at least the expected level by age seven.
- 64 The history of results in national tests at Year 6 indicates that the pupils have not been achieving well in this subject and the performance of both boys and girls has been well below average against schools nationally. However, a higher proportion of the Year 6 pupils reached the higher level in 2003 than in previous years. The results this year are likely to repeat the pattern of previous years as the age group has a large percentage of pupils with learning difficulties. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 make unsatisfactory progress in the subject, standards are well below average and their achievement is unsatisfactory.

- 65 There are several reasons for the poorer performance in Years 3 to 6 than in the infants. Whilst the quality of teaching is frequently good in Years 1 and 2, it has been unsatisfactory in Years 3 to 6. Teachers do not have any reference material to guide them in what is an acceptable standard to achieve a given level of work. The work becomes too formal and pupils do not have enough opportunities to investigate for themselves. In the past, there has been too much emphasis on teachers demonstrating, with the pupils passively looking on. Insufficient attention has been given to the investigative process and too much time given to theoretical applications of science. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 do not, as a result, show enough enthusiasm for the subject and they do not make enough gains in their learning. They are uncertain about the process of investigation. Pupils' communication of their work is descriptive of what has taken place rather than analysing carefully the process and why investigations turn out as they do. They do not predict enough. On the occasions when they do predict, they do not reason their predictions. When they write about their conclusions, they do not explain them. Their diagrams are not well drawn and labelled and their presentation is slapdash. Too much of their written work is copied and tables of results are frequently drawn freehand. The work lacks sufficient depth and expectations have been too low.
- 66 The leadership and management of the subject have been unsatisfactory. The science policy is not specific enough about teaching methods, particularly about investigation, to ensure a consistency of approach across the school, nor does it provide guidance about how the science scheme is to be managed and pupils' progress recorded. The aim in the policy to get pupils to think for themselves is not being fulfilled. Previous monitoring visits to classes have not been analytical enough to help individual teachers improve their skills. A new science leader has just been appointed and she is aware of the weaknesses of the current provision and has clear plans to improve the situation.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in ICT is **unsatisfactory** overall.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The growing enthusiasm for the subject by both staff and pupils;
- The good knowledge, understanding and expertise of the subject leader;
- The good skills of younger children when they leave the Reception class to go into Year 1;
- Below average standards by the time the pupils leave Year 6;
- Unreliable resources;
- Inadequate accommodation to teach the subject;
- The organisation of the timetable does not ensure pupils receive their curriculum entitlement.

### **Commentary**

- 67 Standards in ICT are average at the end of Year 2 and below average at the end of Year 6. Standards reached by the older pupils in the school are not as high as those reported at the previous inspection, when standards were judged to be average overall. This is because the school has not kept abreast of changes to the National Curriculum and the increased expectations for its use across the curriculum. The school has an effective and comprehensive action plan to try and remedy these weaknesses.
- 68 All pupils, including those identified as having special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language, achieve at a satisfactory level in Years 1 and 2 where the pupils' skills are more secure. This is partly due to the good start the pupils make in Year 1 following the good progress they made in the reception class where they have good opportunities to practise their skills. Further up the school, there has been some improvement in Year 4 and in this class the pupil's standards of work are average because of the good work of the subject leader, who is also the Year 4 class teacher. Pupils' achievement in Years 1

and 2 is satisfactory but it is unsatisfactory overall in Years 3 to 6. There are gaps in learning for older pupils especially in Year 6, due to a lack of resources in the past, and this has resulted in too few opportunities for pupils to develop and practise their skills.

- 69 Currently, teaching in ICT is satisfactory overall. In Year 4, the good teaching is helping the pupils acquire the necessary skills in good measure. Pupils in this class are productive in lessons, understand the terminology used and can access the different functions of computers correctly. For example, they can create their own posters of health and safety issues, using graphics to improve their designs and make them more eye-catching and meaningful. In Year 3, the pupils learn to edit their work, using different font sizes and types and a range of colours. Some still find this work complicated. During the inspection the timetable arrangements meant that there were not enough laptops available to the class to ensure a reasonable amount of time was available for them to practise these skills. The class teacher had adapted the lesson to make sure all pupils had an opportunity to use the computers available, but they were not engaged enough because they had to share the laptops. However, the staff's confidence to teach the subject is increasing because of the good expertise of the subject leader in sharing his expertise in developing the subject. The pupils enjoy lessons in information and communication technology. They generally pay reasonable attention, and are productive especially when teaching is good.
- 70 In the main, the curriculum is satisfactorily planned and based on national and local guidelines. Assessment procedures are satisfactory but their use in planning future teaching and learning is not consistent across the school. Leadership and management of ICT are satisfactory. Timetable arrangements are not always secure and the laptops are sometimes needed by different teachers at the same time. There is some use of ICT in other subjects, but it is generally limited. Resources are now adequate but the laptops can be unpredictable when being used. The accommodation arrangements are problematic. There is no designated area for teaching information technology at present, but there are plans to remedy this in the near future with new building work.
- 71 The leadership of the subject is satisfactory but comparatively new. The subject leader has good skills, manages the subject soundly and sets a good example in his own practice of the subject. He has, nevertheless, been hindered by the unsatisfactory resources and accommodation. He is keen to improve the quality of work and has clear ideas for further development when the new ICT suite has been built.

### **ICT across the curriculum**

- 72 ICT across the curriculum is an aspect of the school's work which is yet to be developed fully. There are some links to other subjects in the curriculum, but not many, and the use of ICT as a 'tool' to aid learning in other subjects is limited. There is some good work evident in Year 4 to support learning in other areas, such as history, but this type of work is not consistently or regularly used throughout the school. The subject leader is very aware of this situation and intends to develop this aspect in the future.

## **HUMANITIES**

### **History and geography**

The provision for history and geography is **unsatisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There are informative visits to extend the range of the curriculum;
- The school makes good use of local services to increase the range of resources in history;
- Lack of planned progression across Years 3-6;

- Inconsistent use of literacy and numeracy skills;
- Lack of resources in geography.

### Commentary

- 73 Standards are in line with expectations at the end of Year 2 in **history** and **geography** but are below average in Year 6. Standards in Year 6 are in part explained by the above average proportion of pupils with learning difficulties. However, because the planning does not ensure that pupils build upon what they have learnt across Years 3-6, pupils are not challenged sufficiently. The opportunities for developing literacy and numeracy across the subjects are not planned in sufficient detail. Assessments are not used to set challenging standards for all pupils and so raise expectations.
- 74 Teachers share good relationships with their pupils and pupils work well together in pairs and groups. They listen respectfully to each other. A good range of visits is organised so that pupils can learn by first-hand experience in both subjects. Good use is made of the local support service to ensure sufficient resources are available so that pupils can understand their work in history. In particular, a good range of artefacts is available for the younger pupils to explore as historical evidence. However, there is insufficient challenge in lessons to meet the range of pupils' abilities within a class. Pupils do not build upon that which they have learnt in previous years and this is evident in mapwork skills in geography. Research skills, including those involving the Internet, do not reflect the skills pupils' show in English. There is now a scheme of work, which teachers follow and this is a satisfactory improvement since the last inspection in both subjects.
- 75 No history and geography lessons could be seen in Years 1 and 2 and no geography in Years 3 to 6, because the term's work was focussed on history. The lessons seen in history in Years 3 to 6 were mainly satisfactory. The teaching suffers over time because the teachers do not have enough guidance to teach the skills in the subject in a structured way. Leadership and management of the subjects is unsatisfactory because there has not been enough guidance for staff nor enough oversight over the quality of work.

### CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

#### Art and design, design and technology, music and physical education

The provision for design and technology and art and design is **satisfactory** overall. It is also **satisfactory** in physical education and music.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils receive a full curriculum in physical education and have good opportunities for swimming;
- The provision for sport is good because of the additional extra-curricular activities;
- The good teaching of art and design and design and technology in Years 1 and 2 in both subjects;
- Insufficient challenge in design and technology work for older pupils and below average attainment in art;
- The schemes of work in design and technology and art and design do not provide sufficient progression for the pupils and guidance for the staff.

## Commentary

- 76 Standards in **design and technology and art and design** are average at the end of Year 2 but are below average at the end of Year 6. The standards which the older pupils reach are not as high as those reported at the previous inspection but they are similar at age seven. Pupils in Years 3 and 4, including those identified as having special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, achieve at a satisfactory level. However, pupils in Years 5 and 6 do not achieve sufficiently well, especially those who learn more quickly. They are not always challenged enough in the design and technology work nor made to present their work neatly in art.
- 77 Teaching is satisfactory overall. It is good in Years 1 and 2, although not as strong in Years 5 and 6. The good teaching in Years 1 and 2 promotes the pupils' thinking in design and making skills. In a Year 1 lesson, the teacher motivated the pupils with her enthusiasm and good subject knowledge and her high expectations enabled the pupils to achieve well. In a Year 2 art and design lesson, the teacher set high expectations in a stimulating lesson and used resources well so the pupils achieved to the best of their ability.
- 78 The teaching in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory overall. However, sometimes there is an insufficient match of tasks to the different abilities in the classes to extend pupils who have more skills. Sometimes there is not enough challenge for the older pupils or emphasis on the importance of good presentation of work in art and design, when making designs and recording and evaluating work. However, in Year 3 the good teaching resulted in pupils gaining in their learning about food technology. This work continues in Year 5, but tasks are not extended sufficiently to develop learning fully. By the end of Year 6, the pupils can make their own designs, for example they can devise their own diagrams when making shelters. However, their work is not always presented with sufficient care and their skills in making models are below average for their age. By Year 6 the pupils' art work is below average overall, although they show some basic skills and can apply different techniques, their unsatisfactory presentation and insufficient attention to detail result in immature standards of work, especially in figure drawing.
- 79 The pupils enjoy lessons in art and design and design and technology. In both subjects they generally work well together with a good degree of independence, due regard for safety and sensible behaviour. This is because the relationships between staff and pupils are generally secure, with mutual respect and satisfactory management of behaviour. Assessment procedures are good for design and technology and art and design, but their use in planning future teaching and learning is not consistent across the school, which means there is not always a secure match of tasks to the range of abilities. Both the leadership and management of art are satisfactory, but they have been unsatisfactory in design and technology. There has not been enough monitoring of the progression of skills in the curriculum for design and technology to ensure the pupils build on what they already know, can do and understand. The new subject leader has already addressed some of these shortcomings.
- 80 Pupils reached the expected standard in those **physical education** lessons observed in both key stages. No observations could be made of dance and little in gymnastics. A large proportion of the pupils can swim 25 metres by age 11. Pupils achieved soundly in the aspects of physical education that could be inspected. Pupils are enthusiastic in their lessons, play fairly and co-operate well together in teams. Their behaviour is satisfactory but in some hall lessons pupils are noisy and this affects the rigour of activity.
- 81 The quality of teaching observed in physical education was mostly satisfactory and occasionally good. A good feature of the teaching is the way games skills are demonstrated and taught, for example when pupils are shown how to throw a netball correctly or how to pass a football. Small equipment resources are plentiful to allow small group practice. Lessons are well planned and the skills taught in the first part of the lesson are used in a games setting that follows. The team sizes for these often allow for a good level of active participation but

occasionally, as in football, the team sizes are too large to allow everyone to be fully active. Routines for getting out equipment in gymnastics lessons is not yet fully secure and time is wasted. In one gymnastics lesson, the teacher arranged for the pupils to get out the equipment too soon after the lesson started and this severely restricted the amount of floor space for pupils to practise their movements.

- 82 The pupils have good opportunities to take part in a range of sport during the year both in lessons and after school. The inter-school matches and competitions contribute to the good provision for pupils' social development.
- 83 The subject leader is enthusiastic and leads and manages the subject satisfactorily. The hall is of a satisfactory size but the equipment stored around its perimeter reduces its overall area. In the main, this equipment is old and restricted in range and it is insufficient to challenge all pupils appropriately.
- 84 Little **music** could be observed and it was not possible to make judgements about pupils' attainment and achievements. The school has recently lost its music subject leader who undertook some specialist teaching across the school. Staff now rely on a published scheme with prepared tapes in the absence of expertise among the staff. The teaching in the two lessons observed was satisfactory. Pupils enjoyed the lessons, worked enthusiastically and sang in tune. Temporary arrangements to lead and manage the subject are satisfactory.

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

Provision in personal, social and health education is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is a need for more structure in this work.

### **Commentary**

- 85 This aspect of the school's work is the focus for future development. The school is using a published scheme as an interim measure. Whilst this aspect is formally time-tabled, much of the week's personal, social and health education teaching was taking place outside the inspection period. It was not possible, therefore, to judge its quality. Some good cross-curricular links, such as healthy eating in the science curriculum, provide some good cross-curricular links. The programme for sex education and relationships education for the older pupils is well organised. The school shows much keenness to develop a school council and educate pupils further in democratic principles and participation in decision-making. The leadership and management of this developing aspect of learning are satisfactory.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>4</b>
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
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>5</b>
Pupils' achievement	4
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>4</b>
Attendance	3
Attitudes	4
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	4
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	4
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>4</b>
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	5
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	4
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>4</b>
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	5
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).*