

INSPECTION REPORT

ST MATTHEW'S C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL

Little Lever, Bolton

LEA area: Bolton

Unique reference number: 105242

Headteacher: Rev I C Anthony

Lead inspector: Ms C Waine

Dates of inspection: 22 – 24 September 2003

Inspection number: 257861

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 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	211
School address:	Norris Street Little Level Bolton
Postcode	BL3 1BQ
Telephone number:	01204 333 692
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Revd J Wiseman
Date of previous inspection:	June 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St Matthew's is situated on the outskirts of Bolton in an urban village setting, next to its parish church. As it is a faith school it draws some pupils from a wider area. It is of average size but there are far more boys than girls. This affects several year groups, such as the current Year 6, which has 20 boys and only 11 girls. The school is oversubscribed in some year groups. Almost all pupils are from white UK families; only five percent of pupils, including one refugee, are from minority ethnic backgrounds. Only one pupil is at an early stage of learning English. There is an average proportion of pupils with special educational needs but less pupils than usual have a statement of their needs. The school is proud of its close links with its church and the local community and provides facilities for both groups out of school hours. The school gained an Achievement Award for its improved standards in 2002. Although the school population is fairly stable, in the past few years there has been increasing movement into the older classes. This particularly affects the current Year 6, where one third of pupils entered during Years 3 to 5. The level of attainment on entry varies from year to year but is average overall.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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19709	J Fisher	Team inspector	Science Art and design Design and technology Areas of learning in the Foundation Stage
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **good** and improving school. A strong Christian family ethos promotes the development of pupils' personal qualities **very well** and it is fully inclusive of all its pupils. Academic achievement is **good** because of the **good** quality of teaching. Standards are currently average and are affected considerably by the numbers of pupils entering the school in Years 3 to 6 and the above average proportion of pupils in Year 6 with special educational needs. There is **good** leadership, which is promoting improvement in pupils' achievements. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Provision for the children in the Foundation Stage is very good and they make good progress.
- Pupils achieve well in mathematics and science and standards in mathematics are above average. Standards in English are above average in Year 2 but below average by the end of Year 6, where pupils achieve well in spoken language and in reading but do not achieve enough in writing.
- Standards in information and communication technology are currently a little below average overall by the end of Year 6, although pupils are making good progress.
- Teaching is good throughout the school, particularly for the children in the reception class, where it is very good. Whilst oral feedback in lessons is good, marking and target setting is of inconsistent quality; in some classes it does not inform pupils sufficiently how to improve their work, particularly in writing.
- Leadership is good and the governing body plays an active part in the school's development. Management is satisfactory and the school runs smoothly. There are strengths in the management of resources and in the way the school analyses its assessment information to measure its effectiveness. The procedures for checking the quality of teaching, learning and pupils' progress are not rigorous enough.
- Provision for pupils' personal development is very good and results in very good relationships.
- Attitudes to learning are very good and pupils behave well.

Since the school was inspected in 1998, it has made sound improvement overall and good improvements in mathematics, science, information and communication technology and assessment. The rate of improvement has increased over the past two years as action taken to rectify issues from the last inspection has begun to have an impact on pupils' learning.

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	D	C	B	A
Science	E	D	B	B

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

Children make good progress in the reception class, and are on course to achieve the learning goals set for them; some are likely to exceed them in all areas of learning. In Years 1 to 6, pupils' achievement is **good**, particularly in mathematics, science and art. Standards are average overall and are above average in Year 2. In the current Year 6, standards are average overall. They are affected significantly by movement of pupils in and out of the school and by the above average level of special educational needs related to English. The imbalance of boys and girls also has a particular impact on the standards in English. The promotion of pupils' personal qualities, including their

spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **very good** and effective. Pupils have very good attitudes to school and are keen to learn. Behaviour is good, although a small group of older pupils finds it hard to control their own behaviour.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is **good** overall. Teaching is **good** and very good for the children in the reception class, where the teacher has very high expectations of what children can achieve. Teaching is good in Years 1 to 6 and teachers plan work well to meet pupils' needs. Very good relationships between teachers and pupils give pupils confidence in their work. Pupils are managed positively and motivated to learn by interesting lessons. Teachers give good oral feedback to pupils in lessons but the quality of marking and target setting varies and does not always inform pupils how to improve their work. Pupils lack sufficient opportunities to develop their writing skills in other subjects.

The curriculum is good. It meets all requirements of the National Curriculum, with a sound balance between subjects. There is good enrichment of learning experiences through a range of trips and expert visitors to school and the teaching of French to older pupils. There is a good partnership with parents who have very positive views of the school. Links with the community are good and those with the church are very good. The school provides a good standard of care for its pupils but does not check up on their progress as rigorously as it could, particularly in writing.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **good** overall. The leadership of the headteacher and key staff is good and is promoting improvement. There is a clear view of what must be done to help the school improve further and effective action is taken to rectify any identified weaknesses. Management is satisfactory. Although the school has a full programme of procedures to check the quality of teaching and learning and track pupils' progress, this is not sufficiently rigorous, particularly in English. Governance is good. Governors play an active part in school life. They have a good overview of the school and plan well for its development.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents' views are very positive. They particularly appreciate the Christian ethos that promotes confidence and maturity in their children. Pupils also have positive views about school. They enjoy lessons and have confidence in their teachers.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- raise standards in writing in Years 3 to 6 and provide more opportunities to write in other subjects;
- raise standards in information and communication technology by the end of Year 6;
- improve the rigour and consistency of marking and target setting;
- improve the rigorousness of procedures by which subject leaders check on the quality of teaching, learning and standards in their subjects.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Pupils' achievement is good throughout the school. Standards are average overall. Standards at the end of the reception year are above average, with most children achieving the goals that they are expected to achieve and a good proportion exceeding them. Standards are above average in Year 2 but currently average in Year 6, where a number of factors have a significant effect on the standards achieved:

- the movement of pupils in and out of the school means that the class has changed significantly during Years 3 to 6;
- a quarter of pupils in this age group has special educational needs related to literacy;
- the large number of boys in comparison with girls. This particularly affects standards in English as nationally girls consistently outperform boys.

Standards in English are below average, mainly because of below average standards in writing. Standards in mathematics are above average and standards in science are average.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils make good progress through the school and achieve well.
- Standards in mathematics are good.
- Standards in the reception year and in Year 2 are above average.
- Standards in writing are below average by the end of Year 6.
- Standards in information and communication technology are below average by the end of Year 6, although pupils are making good progress and making up ground.

Commentary

1. On entry to the Foundation Stage, standards are average. In the current year, the new entrants are average overall, but with few children who were of higher attainment on entry. Children make good progress in all areas of learning and are on target to achieve the learning goals set for them. A good proportion is likely to exceed these goals and standards are above average in each area of learning.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.4 (16.1)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	14.9 (14.2)	14.4 (14.3)
mathematics	16.9 (17.3)	16.5 (16.2)

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

2. Standards in Year 2 are above average and pupils achieve well. This reflects an improvement on the standards recorded in national tests in 2002. Test results in 2003 improved in all three subjects but there is as yet no national data available for comparison. There was a fall in standards in reading and writing following the previous inspection. The school identified the difficulties by analysing its test results and took effective action to remedy them. For example, it introduced a new and lively approach to teaching phonics. As a result, the quality of teaching improved and pupils now make good progress. Standards in reading are now similar to those of the previous inspection and standards in writing have improved, particularly in the last two years when the impact of the new initiatives was felt. Standards in mathematics in the current Year 2 are average, but represent good achievement for pupils. There has been good improvement overall in achievement and standards in mathematics

since the previous inspection. Standards in science are above average and in information and communication technology (ICT) are average.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.4 (26.8)	27.0 (27.0)
mathematics	28.1 (26.5)	26.7 (26.6)
science	29.4 (27.5)	28.3 (28.3)

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

- Standards are average overall in the current Year 6 and not as high as those recorded in the tests of 2002. Standards are similar to the results of tests in 2003, which represent good achievement for both year groups, particularly the current Year 6, where high levels of movement in and out of the school and the high proportion of pupils who are of lower attainment or who have special educational needs have an impact on standards overall. Standards in English are also affected by the large number of boys within the year group; nationally, girls consistently outperform boys in this subject.
- Standards in English are below average, overall. Whilst the make up of the year group is a significant factor, pupils achieve well in speaking and listening and reading but do not achieve enough in writing. The school has recognised this and put strategies into place to raise standards. The impact of these initiatives is evident in the lower juniors but has not yet been as effective for older pupils. Standards in mathematics are above average and have improved since the previous inspection. Improvement has been secured by the effective introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy, which led to improved quality of teaching and learning.
- Standards in science have improved since the previous inspection because the school has changed the way it teaches the subject, focusing on a practical approach that provides good levels of challenge for all pupils. Standards are currently average but reflect good achievement for pupils. Standards in ICT are below average by the end of Year 6 because of a lack of experience in some areas of the subject. Pupils are now making good progress and making up lost ground.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets set for them because work is planned well to meet their needs and they are supported well. Pupils for whom English is not the first language make good progress in learning to communicate orally and in writing because they are supported well and staff take time to ensure that they understand what is said.
- Standards are above average in art and average in physical education in both Years 2 and 6. Pupils achieve well in art and satisfactorily in physical education. Other subjects were only sampled in the inspection and no judgement was made on standards or progress in history, geography, design and technology and personal, social, health and citizenship education (PHSCE). However, all work seen was at least satisfactory.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes to school are very good and their behaviour is good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection, when it was reported that a small group of pupils, mainly boys, occasionally disrupted classes. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. This is also an improvement because these aspects were then recorded as satisfactory overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are keen to learn and join in all activities with enthusiasm.
- Pupils' willingness to show enterprise and take responsibility is very good.
- The school promotes good relationships, including racial harmony.
- Pupils' confidence and self-esteem are very good.
- Spiritual development is very good; pupils develop very good levels of respect for the feelings and beliefs of others.
- Moral and social development are very good.
- Cultural development is very good.
- Attendance is good and punctuality is very good.

Commentary

8. Pupils are interested in their lessons, show good concentration and work hard, in response to teachers' high expectations of their work ethic. They take a full and enthusiastic part in activities.
9. Behaviour is good and often very good in lessons. There are a few older pupils with identified behavioural difficulties but they are managed well and rarely impact on the learning of others. Relationships between pupils are good; they mainly play well together in mixed groups and no one is isolated. Occasionally play in the playground is boisterous but older pupils care for younger ones and take responsibility for resolving disputes. Pupils develop respect for each other and there is little incidence of bullying, racism or other forms of harassment in school. Pupils maintain that bullying is rare; if any unpleasant incidents do occur they know what to do and are confident that the staff will deal effectively with the problem. Pupils have good levels of self-esteem. They talk confidently with adults and are not afraid to express their views in classroom discussions.
10. Attendance is good for the majority of the school year and is above the national average. It is adversely affected in the summer term by the taking of annual family holidays. Systems are in place to monitor and control punctuality, which is very good. However, there is no system in place to contact parents on the first day of any unexplained absence.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.7	School data	0.2
National data	5.4	National data	0.5

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

11. Provision for pupils' personal development is very good and a strength of the school; it reflects its aim of creating a Christian family learning ethos. Spiritual development is very good and enhanced well by close links with the church. Pupils have a good understanding of their place in the school and church communities and value the fact that their achievements are celebrated. They understand and accept the different beliefs and cultures of others.
12. Social and moral development are very good; pupils have a good understanding of right and wrong and learn to accept responsibility for themselves and others. This is promoted well by specific lessons in PHSCE when pupils learn how to make sensible decisions about their own lives and how to be responsible members of a community. They are very willing to take on responsibilities and the school council provides valuable suggestions on improving life in school, many of which have been implemented. The wide range of educational visits enhances social development.

13. Pupils' cultural development is very good. Pupils listen to a wide range of music, including music from other cultures, such as African music. They visit Bridgewater Hall to experience musical performances. Visitors come to school to talk about their cultures, such as about Indian dancing and life for Muslim and Jewish families during Ramadan and The Passover. Pupils develop a sound understanding of life in a multicultural society.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	201	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	5	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	3	0	0
Black or Black British – African	1	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

The quality of education is good and promotes pupils' academic and personal development well.

Teaching and learning

Teaching is good overall and promotes good learning for pupils. During the inspection, teaching was always at least satisfactory; it was good in the majority of lessons, with a few lessons where it was very good. Examination of pupils' books confirms that this is the usual standard of teaching. It marks an improvement on the previous inspection when some teaching was unsatisfactory. Teaching is very good for the children in the Foundation Stage and good in mathematics, science, information and communication technology and art. It is good in English in Years 1 and 2.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very good for the pupils in the reception class.
- Teaching is good in Years 1 to 6.
- Teachers plan interesting lessons, using a variety of effective methods to engage and sustain pupils' interest. Lessons are organized and managed well.
- Teachers know their pupils well and usually plan work well to meet their needs.
- Very good relationships between teachers and pupils, give pupils confidence.
- Pupils' positive attitudes and behaviour make a strong contribution to learning.
- There is good use of support staff and specialist teachers.
- There is good attention to developing pupils' vocabulary in all subjects but teachers do not provide enough opportunities for writing in other subjects.
- The quality of marking is inconsistent between classes; it does not always help pupils to improve their work.
- The use of individual learning targets is not sufficiently developed to help pupils understand their next steps in learning.

Commentary

14. Teaching for the pupils in the reception class is very good and children are enthusiastic learners. Very good teamwork between the teacher and good quality support staff reflects their high expectations of children.
15. Teaching is good overall and good in mathematics, science, ICT and art and for the pupils with special educational needs. It is good in English in Years 1 and 2 and in literacy lessons in Years 3 to 6. At the time of the previous inspection, teaching was satisfactory overall and good in many lessons. Teaching was unsatisfactory in ICT, because teachers did not have enough knowledge of the subject. It has improved in English, mathematics and science because the school identifies weaknesses in these subjects by analysing assessment information and test results. Training and improved resources have been effective in these subjects and in ICT. Whilst these have been successful in improving teaching, there is scope for even more improvement. The school has not taken a rigorous approach to checking how successful their work has been, particularly in English. For example, it recognised the need to improve the teaching of phonics and spelling and introduced a new approach. Whilst this has improved standards in Years 1 and 2, there has been no check on its impact throughout the school, such as by examining pupils' work from each year group.
16. At the previous inspection, there was sometimes a slow pace to lessons, not all were sufficiently organised and teachers did not allow pupils to think for themselves. This has now been rectified and teachers use time well, particularly in English, mathematics, science and ICT lessons. They plan interesting lessons, using a variety of methods to engage pupils in learning. Work and resources are prepared and organised well, so that pupils can work efficiently. Teachers have very good relationships with their pupils, which gives them confidence in attempting new work. They manage pupils very well; the behaviour policy is applied consistently and pupils' positive attitudes and behaviour make a strong contribution to their own learning. The school makes effective use of specialist teachers in French, art and music.
17. Support staff make a valuable contribution to the learning of pupils with special educational needs. They are deployed well to meet those pupils' needs, enabling them to take a full part in lessons. The use of a designated teacher supports their development of basic literacy skills well. Staff value the contribution of these pupils and encourage them to participate fully in whole class sessions.
18. Teachers know their pupils well and make good use of their assessment information in most lessons to provide work that is sufficiently demanding of most pupils. The use of individual targets is at an early stage and is not yet rigorous enough to help all pupils understand how to improve their work or how well they are progressing towards their targets. Whilst some teachers make sound use of marking to inform pupils of their successes and areas for improvement, others do not inform them sufficiently to help them improve their work or understand how well they are progressing towards their targets.
19. Teachers focus well on developing pupils' vocabulary, language and reading skills across all subjects, providing ample opportunities for discussion and research but they do not provide enough opportunities for writing.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 29 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	4	15	10	0	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

The curriculum

The curriculum is good overall. The school provides a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum and now complies fully with the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum and for the Foundation Stage. This is an improvement on the previous inspection when not all requirements were met. The curriculum meets the needs of all pupils and provides them with an appropriate basis for learning on transfer to secondary education.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The Foundation Stage curriculum is very good.
- The breadth of curricular opportunities is good.
- There is good provision for the pupils with special educational needs.
- There is good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education.
- There is very good equality of access and opportunity for all pupils.
- Extra curricular activities and visits enrich the curriculum.
- Resources are good but accommodation for the school's libraries is restricted.
- Planning for the development of literacy skills and the incorporation of information and communication technology across the whole curriculum is not systematic enough.

Commentary

20. The children in the Foundation Stage experience a rich curriculum based on the nationally recommended areas of learning. The sharp focus on personal, social and emotional development is very effective in enabling children to settle happily and confidently into their first year of school life. Improved outdoor accommodation and provision of relevant resources enable the children to engage in and develop their outdoor physical skills.
21. There has been good improvement in the curriculum for all pupils since the previous inspection. All subjects now have a suitable policy, including racial education and citizenship, and detailed schemes of work provide an effective framework for teachers' planning and pupils' learning. Teachers provide sound opportunities for pupils to apply and develop their numeracy and reading skills across the whole curriculum and good opportunities to develop understanding of specific vocabulary. There is no systematic approach to developing writing skills across the whole curriculum. Similarly, although teachers make good use of the laptop suite in some lessons, not all provide enough opportunities for pupils to use classroom computers across the curriculum.
22. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Pupils have clear targets in their individual education plans, mainly aimed at improving literacy, numeracy and social skills. They are given good support in class so that they can work alongside their classmates at their own level and have full access to the curriculum. In their literacy groups, work concentrates on improving their basic skills of reading and writing so that they make good progress towards their targets. The school provides very well for their inclusion in the full curriculum and all events and activities outside lessons.
23. Provision for personal, social, health and citizenship education is good. All relevant topics, such as sex education and awareness of the dangers of drugs, are taught at appropriate times. Specific lessons on citizenship are now a regular feature and the recent policy is integrated effectively across the curriculum. Pupils are offered many opportunities to learn to become good citizens, either in formal lessons or by taking responsibility within the school. In these lessons, pupils are given opportunities to listen, think and speak as they explore a variety of issues. They consider how to develop ideas about themselves and deal with difficult situations that might arise in their own lives, such as social justice and the consequences of aggressive behaviour.

24. The school sets a very high priority on ensuring equality of access for all. The adult support for pupils is particularly good and ensures that all pupils play a full part in all lessons. Although in some classes there is an imbalance in the number of boys and girls, there is no evidence that either is disadvantaged. Boys and girls collaborate well and strengths and successes appear to be equally shared.
25. The range of educational visits to enrich the curriculum and enhance pupils' learning opportunities is good. A strength of the provision is the number of experiences that cannot be offered within classrooms, such as visits to working museums, art galleries, historic houses and sites. Older pupils have opportunities to take part in a residential visit to an outdoor pursuits centre. The curriculum is supported soundly by a range of outdoor activities, including opportunities to participate in local sporting tournaments and to take part in after school clubs, such as football and rounders, as well as external competitions and tournaments.
26. There are good numbers of teachers and staff to meet the demands of the curriculum. Accommodation is satisfactory overall; the newly refurbished areas and the addition of a designated outdoor play area for the Foundation Stage are of great benefit to the school. The school libraries are small, and housed in recesses in the corridors, so accessibility by pupils is limited. The school is provided well with learning resources and teaching materials in all subjects, including a good range of books to encourage reading. Resources in ICT are adequate since the recent purchase of laptops and are shared equally by all classes.

Care, guidance and support

Provision is good. The school cares well for its pupils and there is generally a high level of attention to matters of welfare and health and safety. Parents are very happy with the care and welfare the school provides for their children.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff know children and families very well.
- There is a high level of personal support.
- Very good induction procedures to reception.
- Occasionally inadequate lunchtime supervision.

Commentary

27. Child protection procedures are sound and all classroom staff are aware of their responsibilities. The levels of playground supervision are occasionally not high enough. There is a good selection of play equipment but this is not always used effectively, which is a contributory factor to the amount of boisterous play at lunchtimes. Year 6 playground mediators provide good support for younger pupils by helping them sort out disputes.
28. Standards of maintenance and cleanliness are good and vandalism and graffiti is dealt with promptly. This instils high values in the pupils who show respect for property and resources. Teachers know their pupils and families well and provide a very good level of personal support, involving parents where necessary. Pupils are confident in approaching adults in the school. There is a clear and consistently applied reward system that encourages good achievement in all aspects of personal and academic development.
29. Induction arrangements for pupils entering reception are very good and establish a good home-school relationship. There is a good range of opportunities for pupils to take on responsibilities for the day to day running of the school. The school council has contributed to the development of the school and some of the suggestions made have been implemented leading to improved playground behaviour and toilet conditions.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

There is a good and effective partnership with parents, the community and other schools. The views of parents were very positive in the parents' questionnaire and at the parents' meeting.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are very supportive of the school.
- Reports do not tell parents clearly what their child needs to do next.
- Links with the church are very strong.
- There are very good links with other schools that benefit pupils.
- There are good links with the community.
- There is an active PTA.
- There are no regular parent assemblies.

Commentary

30. Parents' responses to the inspection questionnaire show that they are very happy about all that the school has to offer. They particularly value the caring, Christian ethos. An active PTA supports the school well by providing good social opportunities for parents and their children and by providing good financial support for learning resources. The school has also sought parents' views through a general questionnaire but the response was disappointing, with only 14 parents responding.
31. Whilst information for parents is sound, reports do not provide them with a clear statement about what their child needs to learn next. The use of homework and reading diaries is good and is an effective means of communication. Parents are welcome in school and attend special events and parent evenings but there are no regular parents' assemblies. Procedures for pupils entering reception are very good; staff make home visits and visits to nurseries and parents are invited to discuss any problems that arise shortly after their child has started school.
32. Links with the church are very strong and support the strong Christian ethos in the school. Church members contribute effectively to the life of the school. The Parish Priest leads weekly assemblies and pupils attend services in the church, such as the annual 'Welcome Service' for new reception children.
33. The school has good links with other local schools. For example, there is an exchange of teachers for French in Years 5 and 6; Year 6 pupils visit the secondary school for ICT lessons; links with a Beacon school provide some opportunities for pupils who are gifted or talented to enrich their learning. The school maintains very good relationships with local secondary schools and this helps pupils transfer smoothly.
34. Links with the local community are beneficial and recently have been very effective in providing funds for the new outdoor play area and equipment for the reception class. Local business enterprises give valued, specialist support in the teaching and learning of design and technology.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of leadership and management is good overall. Leadership by the headteacher and other key staff is good and management is satisfactory. Governance is good, with governors playing an active part in the life of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good leadership by the headteacher and other key staff has promoted sound improvement overall.
- There is a very good learning ethos and the school is committed to the full inclusion of all its pupils.
- There is a good level of shared commitment to improvement of provision and standards.
- The governing body is well informed, has a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development in the school and fulfils its statutory duties.
- There is a close partnership between governors, the school and the church.
- Educational priorities are supported well through financial planning.
- Specific grants received by the school are used effectively.
- Management systems to check the quality of provision and the impact of new initiatives lack consistency and rigour, particularly in English and ICT.
- Parents have confidence in the leadership of the school and are appreciative of its caring, Christian family ethos.

Commentary

35. The leadership of the headteacher and key staff is good and has been successful in providing for improvements in all the issues identified at the previous inspection. Management systems are satisfactory overall but the systems by which the school checks the quality of teaching and learning lack rigour and consistency, particularly in English. Whilst there has been good progress in most of the issues the role of some curriculum co-ordinators remains underdeveloped. Whilst all have some time allocated to fulfil their roles and they lead their subjects well, not all have sufficient opportunities to gain a good overview of actual provision in their subjects, through lesson observation or the systematic examination of pupils' work. Performance Management is effective in identifying areas for improvement, targeting improvement in standards and providing appropriate training.
36. The school is highly committed to providing equality of opportunity for all its pupils and a very effective and supportive Christian ethos pervades the whole of school life. All are valued; this is important to parents and who appreciate the way that the school values and supports for their children. The management of special educational needs is good and the school provides well for staffing and resources to meet their needs.
37. The governing body is actively involved in shaping the vision and direction of the school and fulfils its responsibilities well. All statutory requirements are now in place, including the recently adopted racial policy, developed with support from the local education authority. Governors are kept informed well and have a clear view of the strengths of the school and where it needs to improve. There are close and beneficial links between the governors, the school and the church, which contribute well to the ethos of the school.
38. Planning for school improvement is good. The school analyses its performance in tests in comparison with other schools and has a clear picture of it is now and where it needs to improve. The school development plan is a collaborative, comprehensive document, based on self- evaluation of the previous years' targets together with other targets identified by an analysis of statutory test results and national initiatives. Financial planning is tied tightly to the priorities of the plan. Progress is checked each term but the evaluation of the impact of new initiatives, such as the phonics and spelling programme lacks rigour.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	459,592
Total expenditure	463,777
Expenditure per pupil	2,219

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	18,918
Balance carried forward to the next	13,733

39. Parents are happy with the leadership and management of the school and the improvements over recent years. There is a strong sense of trust in the school and a great appreciation of the caring Christian ethos, which promotes their children's development very well.
40. Day-to-day administration is efficient and makes good use of new technology to enhance its efficiency and reduce the administrative burden on staff. The costs per pupil are average and in view of the good provision and achievement of pupils, the school gives good value for money.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for the Foundation Stage is **very good** and, as at the previous inspection, it is strength of the school.

The school provides a very good start to children's education and good improvement has been made since the previous inspection. There are continuing improvements in the quality of teaching and learning and in the provision for outdoor play. Staff have a very good understanding of how young pupils learn and the teacher plans a wide range of interesting activities across all areas of learning. Excellent teamwork between all staff creates a very effective learning environment and staff manage the children very well. Assessment is now very good and used very well to match work to the needs of all, but target setting is new and is not yet having an impact on learning. The attainment of children on entry to school varies from year to year but is average overall. The current year group is average overall but has few children who are of higher attainment on entry. An examination of past and current work shows that children make good progress towards the learning goals set for this age and achieve well. Most are on target to achieve the goals and a good proportion are likely to exceed them. Standards in personal, social and emotional development have risen since the previous inspection. All children are included in all activities and those with special educational needs are given a high level of appropriate support. The good quantity and quality of resources in all areas of learning stimulates children's imaginations and language skills.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The classroom is structured well with organised routines, which provide a sense of security.
- Daily routines show high expectations of children, within a framework of appropriate experiences and activities to encourage responsibility and independence.
- Children's efforts are valued and work accomplished in school and at home is celebrated.
- Relationships are very good and foster the emotional and social development of the children very well.
- Adults provide very good role models and children feel secure, happy and confident.
- There are no opportunities for children to select their own snacks or to register themselves on arrival as tools for developing independence.

Commentary

41. Adults are very effective in nurturing all pupils' personal and social skills. Children enter the class confidently because of the school's very good induction procedures. They adapt quickly to the routines, learning to make decisions and organise their own time through a wide range of very well thought out 'free choice' activities.
42. The excellent liaison between the teacher and support staff is beneficial to all children. Children are happy and enthusiastic, concentrate well and work with interest. They are motivated well and co-operate sensibly when sharing equipment. Children's attitudes to learning and their behaviour are very good. Resources are very well matched to individual needs to enable children to concentrate and persevere independently for lengthy periods of time. Children with special educational needs receive very good support from the teacher, nursery nurse and teaching assistant and make good gains in their learning. Opportunities for independence during snack time and by registering themselves on arrival are limited.

43. The respect and care that the children receive, contributes well to their spiritual, moral and social development and most children respond very well by being polite, kind and helpful to others.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are very good, early opportunities for children to become competent in basic skills.
- Imaginative resources, along with role-play, are used very effectively to promote speaking and listening skills.
- Children have very good, incidental opportunities to attempt to write with developing confidence.
- There is a well-organised and equipped library, although it is small.
- High quality book-sacks, made by volunteers, promote a keen interest in reading.
- Comments in reading diaries do not always extend learning.

Commentary

44. Speaking and listening skills are taught well through a wide variety of methods such as songs, stories and discussions and by using relevant vocabulary in all activities. Most children interact satisfactorily with each other, and the appropriate balance of teacher talk and children's opportunities to speak in front of others, enhance their learning. Skilful teaching and very good use of resources maintains their interest and concentration. Children listen and enjoy stories, such as 'Sam, Sue and the snake' and are eager to join in. A new system of teaching phonics has proved successful and promoted good progress in reading and writing. Children take books home regularly and share the stories with their parents and other adults. Most recognise a range of simple words that occur frequently. Attractive story book-sacks made by parents and church members, support and enhance the acquisition of literacy skills. Some homework diaries, whilst acknowledging parents' comments, do not give advice on how to further extend the children's learning. Children are given many formal and incidental opportunities to develop their independent writing skills. Staff draw children's attention to the correct formation of letters and many children are developing good pencil control. Most make good attempts at early writing; pupils who are of lower attainment are given very good adult support to help them make progress.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very good.
- There are very good, early opportunities for children to become competent in key skills.
- Imaginative resources, along with role-play, are used very effectively to promote numeracy skills.

Commentary

45. Children sing a range of counting songs and use an interactive display well, to touch and count up to seven. Jigsaws, construction bricks, and puzzles are used effectively to encourage recognition of similar shapes and familiar colours. Children enjoy counting and spotting the teacher's deliberate mistakes, such as when the figure 3 was omitted from a number line. No opportunity is missed to reinforce counting skills by rhythmic chanting of the numbers and the use of a puppet and a washing line. Through constructional play, children show an interest in shape and space and talk about shapes in the world around them. Children have many opportunities to explore and use all areas of mathematics. All adults help

all children, including those with special educational needs effectively, so they all are fully involved and make good progress.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children develop enquiring minds.
- Effective links are made between science, art and design, design and technology, history, geography and religious education.
- Role-play raises awareness of the cultural and multicultural society in which children live.
- There are good opportunities to design and make objects, using a variety of skills and techniques.
- There is a wide range of resources to support the curriculum.

Commentary

46. Children make good progress and achieve well because of their many opportunities to learn about the world around them through well-planned themes, such as 'Growth', 'Self', and 'Food'. They investigate for themselves and question why things happen. Children gain a sense of the passing of time through the regular use of significant times of the day and daily routines and learn about significant events in the year and in the church calendar, such as Harvest, Easter and Christmas. They plan, design and make products, such as attractive puppets from materials and sew soft toys and use a range of construction equipment to design and build models, linked to their other work, such as different types of buildings and vehicles. Children are familiar with the computer and use a computer mouse confidently to click on to the correct picture on the computer screen. There is a very good variety of role-play scenarios to bring learning in the different topics to life, such as a Victorian kitchen, a Chinese restaurant and a jungle. A very good programme of visits is used to raise awareness of the cultural and multicultural society in which children live.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very good and children achieve well.
- Resources are good and much improved since the previous inspection, although there are still a few shortages for outdoor play.

Commentary

47. Physical skills develop well as a result of very good teaching and frequent opportunities to use a range of appropriate resources. When children enter the reception class their manipulative skills and co-ordination are usually typical for their age, with appropriate control in large and small-scale movements. They develop this control and improve co-ordination and learn to express their feelings and emotions through movement, working co-operatively in groups. They learn to take turns and share resources well and use tools and equipment, such as pencils and scissors with adroitness and increasing dexterity.
48. No physical education lesson was seen, but photographs of Sports Day and lesson activities indicate that there are sound opportunities to develop a sense of space and bodily awareness, learn to co-operate, and work as a team.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are regular and frequent opportunities to explore and experiment in two and three-dimensional art.
- There are very good resources to support the curriculum.
- Creative development is linked well to all other areas of the curriculum.

Commentary

49. Skilful teaching ensures that children have a rich variety of opportunities to develop their creative abilities. They make good progress in their artistic skills and achieve standards that exceed the goals set for them, such as when they paint good quality observational paintings of skeletons. Children show creativity and imagination and explore and experiment using colour, texture, shape, form and space in two and three-dimensional art. They enjoy regular opportunities to explore colour, learn how to use tools correctly and make sound use of their developing computer skills to create artwork. Children also make good gains in their dramatic expression in role-play, exploring ideas introduced through investigations, stories and shared personal experience. No music lesson was observed but singing is used regularly and effectively in the classroom. Songs, chants and jingles are used very effectively to reinforce literacy and numeracy.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

English and French

Provision in English is **satisfactory** overall and for the pupils in Years 1 and 2 it is good. No lessons were observed in French during the inspection and as teaching is based on oral work it was not possible to make judgements on the standards or quality of provision in that subject.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in reading and writing are above average by the end of Year 2.
- Teaching and learning are sound overall. They are good for pupils in Years 1 and 2 and often good in literacy lessons in Years 3 to 6.
- Standards of speaking and listening are good throughout the school.
- Standards of spelling and punctuation are below average by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
- There are not enough opportunities to write in other subjects.
- Assessment data is used well to identify areas for curriculum development.
- Marking and targets are not used effectively to help pupils improve their work.
- The subject development is led well. Management is satisfactory overall but procedures to check quality are not rigorous enough.

Commentary

50. Standards in Year 2 are above average and reflect an improvement on the national tests of 2002. In 2003, results of tests were better and reflect current standards. Improvement has been secured in both reading and writing because the school identified weaknesses in the teaching of phonics, spelling and punctuation and took effective action to remedy them.
51. Standards are below average in the current Year 6, particularly in writing. Evidence from work of Year 6 pupils in 2002-2003, shows that pupils made satisfactory progress over Years 3 to

6 but that standards were lower than those recorded in the national tests of 2002. An examination of school assessment data shows that these pupils make satisfactory progress since their national tests in Year 2. The decline in standards in the previous and current Year 6 is largely because of the make up of the year groups, with above average movement in and out of the school and the high proportion of special educational needs related to literacy. Standards in speaking and listening and reading are better than those in writing and pupils achieve well; most enjoy reading and read with sound fluency and confidence. Pupils should achieve more in writing; standards of spelling and punctuation are below average, with many average and lower attaining pupils not applying common rules in their work. For example:

- they forget to drop the final 'e' before adding 'ing';
- they misspell common words such as 'dos' for 'does', 'eny' for 'any';
- some forget to put capital letters at the start of sentences, even though they use a full stop.

Whilst teachers correct spelling and punctuation errors within the work, the approach to teaching correct rules is not as effective as it is for younger pupils. The success of the measures that the school has put into place is now apparent amongst younger juniors but they have not yet had sufficient impact on the work of older pupils.

52. Throughout the school, pupils' speaking and listening skills are good and most are confident in speaking aloud. The school provides many good opportunities for pupils to develop their skills by discussing their work in pairs, groups and whole class sessions. Teachers focus on developing a wide range of vocabulary to help them explain themselves clearly and make their work interesting. Although most pupils use a good range of descriptive vocabulary to make their stories interesting, they have too little experience of factual writing, such as reports of work in other subjects. The school has identified this as a weakness to be addressed this year but not all teachers are providing enough opportunities to develop these skills across the curriculum.
53. Teaching is satisfactory overall; it is good in Years 1 and 2 and in most literacy lessons. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and plan interesting lessons, using time and resources well to motivate pupils to work hard. They incorporate computers in to some lessons, particularly when they use the laptop suite in literacy. Teachers use their knowledge of their pupils well to plan work to meet their needs. They have very good relationships with pupils and this gives pupils confidence in taking a full part in whole class sessions and in attempting new work. Class management is positive and pupils' very good attitudes and good behaviour contribute well to their learning. A support teacher and classroom support assistants promote good progress for the pupils with special educational needs by focusing on the teaching of basic literacy skills, both within lessons and in withdrawal groups.
54. Whilst assessment information is used well to identify areas for curriculum development and training for staff, it is not used as effectively in informing pupils how they can improve their work. Some teachers mark work well but others just congratulate successes without saying how work could get better. Teachers have begun to set precise targets for learning but these are not used consistently by all; in the best examples the current target is referred to in oral feedback and in marking but in some classes there are several targets which are not referred to on an on-going basis.
55. The subject is led well and clear and appropriate priorities are set to improve standards and rectify the weaknesses highlighted by assessment information. Staff training and resources are provided to support developments but the management systems for checking the quality of teaching and learning are not rigorous enough for subject leaders to gain a clear insight on the effectiveness of new initiatives.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

56. Teachers place a good emphasis on specific vocabulary in each subject, ensuring that pupils understand the terminology. Pupils draw on this well to explain their thinking in small groups and whole class sessions. They use their reading skills appropriately in research across the curriculum, using both books and the Internet.
57. Whilst teachers provide a good variety of opportunities to write in literacy lessons, they do not all plan to develop pupils' skills in other subjects. The school has identified factual writing as a weakness and teachers in some classes plan sound opportunities to record work in different styles. However, there is no whole school systematic approach to this and others do not provide enough opportunities.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well and standards are above average by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils manipulate numbers well and are good at mental mathematics.
- Pupils develop an interest in mathematics and enjoy investigating numbers.
- The teaching of mathematics is good.
- The leadership and management of the subject are good.
- Information and communication technology is not used frequently enough in lessons.
- Marking of pupils' work does not always indicate how the work could be improved.

Commentary

58. Pupils make good progress through the school and achieve well. Pupils' results in national tests in 2002 were average but performance improved in 2003, with pupils gaining higher average grades. Standards in the current Year 2 are average, reflecting a higher proportion of lower attaining pupils in the year group. Standards are above average in Year 6, as in the tests in 2002. Results in 2003 were a little lower than in 2002 because of changes in the year group. National data is not yet available for comparison for 2003. Results of national tests have improved since the previous inspection because of good leadership and the successful introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy, which have both contributed to the improved quality of teaching and learning.
59. Pupils enjoy manipulating numbers and are enthusiastic about methods that make calculating easier. They respond quickly in mental arithmetic sessions, applying their knowledge of the four rules of number (addition, subtraction, multiplication and division) well. Most apply their knowledge well in solving problems but some of the pupils with special educational needs in literacy are hampered by their weak reading skills when solving word problems. They are supported well in lessons to help them make good progress on work that is matched well to their needs.
60. The quality of teaching and learning is good. The teachers have a good knowledge of mathematics and use this to organise interesting lessons that motivate their pupils to learn. In particular the teaching of specific mathematics vocabulary and mental mathematics is effective and pupils use the correct mathematical vocabulary to explain and discuss their work, such as "factor" "equivalent fractions" "denominator" and "numerator". Teachers use their good knowledge of their pupils to plan work well to meet the needs of all different groups within their class. Teachers have a warm relaxed relationship with the pupils and as a result their confidence is bolstered so that they willingly tackle problems that they thought initially were too difficult. Marking is satisfactory overall but does not often enough indicate how pupils might improve their work. Homework is regularly set and makes a valuable contribution to the

standards achieved. Resources are used well. For example, in some numeracy lessons the laptop suite is used and teachers demonstrate new learning effectively using a laptop to project work onto the whiteboard. However, the use of classroom computers is less well developed.

61. The subject is led and managed well, which has promoted good improvement since the previous inspection, when standards were average and teaching was satisfactory. Knowledgeable and enthusiastic leadership coupled with a systematic approach to checking the quality of teaching and learning have proved effective in raising standards throughout the school. Assessment procedures are good and information is used to check pupils' progress on a termly basis, setting targets for the next steps in learning. Good priorities are established for development through an analysis of assessment information and appropriate action is taken to rectify any weaknesses. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection.

Mathematics across the curriculum

62. Pupils' numeracy skills are good and effective in supporting their work across the whole curriculum. Teachers plan good opportunities for pupils to apply and develop these skills in many subjects. For example, in science they use graphs well to present their findings and carry out calculations competently when undertaking fieldwork on rivers in geography. In ICT, pupils use databases and spreadsheets satisfactorily to present their numerical findings in graphs.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average by the end of Year 2.
- Teaching is good and pupils achieve well.
- Strong leadership by the co-ordinator.
- The importance that teachers place on teaching scientific skills so that activities are well planned and prepared, frequently making use of practical tasks and investigations.
- Lesson objectives are clearly defined and the tasks are often challenging, but achievable.
- Work is planned well to build on prior work attainment but in some classes it is at the same level for all pupils.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are positive.
- Assessment information is not yet used to set targets for pupils' next steps in learning.
- Marking does not extend pupils' learning in most classes.

Commentary

63. Standards are above average in Year 2 and similar to the national average in Year 6. Pupils achieve well throughout the school because of good teaching. In Year 2 standards are better than those recorded in the teacher assessments in 2002 and better than those of the previous inspection. Teacher assessments in 2003 also show improvement on those of 2002. There has been a fall in standards by the end of Year 6 from the national tests results of 2002, which were above average, which reflects a variation in the year group. There has been good improvement in the grades that pupils in Year 6 attain in national tests since the previous inspection, because of improvements in the way the subject is taught. There has been an improvement in provision for experimental and investigative science and teachers rely less on worksheets.
64. In Year 2 pupils plan their own investigations, make predictions and observe carefully. They have positive attitudes to learning and enjoy many opportunities to explore and investigate

independently. They develop a good understanding of how to conduct a fair scientific test and record their findings. They learn to think and act like scientists, which has a significant effect on their progress. By Year 6 pupils predict well, carry out fair experiments to test their ideas and record their work carefully, collaborating very well in groups to solve problems and draw sensible conclusions from their investigations.

65. Teaching is good and pupils make good gains in learning throughout the school. This is an improvement since the previous inspection and has occurred because of improved emphasis on allowing pupils to learn independently. Pupils enjoy the practical and independent approach and develop very good attitudes to learning. Teachers plan interesting lessons and progressively build up pupils' knowledge and skills. They focus very well on ensuring that pupils understand scientific terminology and use it in their discussions. Many provide sound opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in recording their work in different ways, such as writing reports and presenting scientific data in charts and graphs. However, sometimes this relies on worksheets and does not provide enough opportunity to develop factual writing skills, which is an identified priority for the school. Numeracy skills are applied well in measurements and the collection of data and pupils present it in a variety of appropriate ways, sometimes using computers.
66. Teachers carry out regular assessments of pupils' work and can check their progress across the year. This is not yet used to set different learning tasks for those who are higher or lower attaining pupils or to set targets for the next steps in learning. Marking of work is mainly confined to congratulating success and does not help pupils to understand what they need to do next to improve.
67. The subject also supports the school's curriculum for personal, social and health education very well; pupils learn about the importance of a healthy diet, personal hygiene and the care necessary when using medicine and other drugs. Links with other subjects, such as design and technology and art and design are used effectively to enrich pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding.
68. The co-ordinator provides strong professional leadership to class teachers and offers workshops to parents, which are well attended. A good scheme of work supports teachers well in planning work to build on previous learning. The school has begun to assess pupils' learning each half term and checks their progress but this has not yet begun to impact on standards. Visits to scientific centres, such as Manchester Science Museum, and science workshops enhance pupils' learning well.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils make good progress in developing knowledge and skills and are confident in using computers.
- Teaching is good.
- Standards are below average by the end of Year 6.
- The subject is well led and this has promoted good improvement.
- There are a few shortages in computer software and some classroom computers are currently out of use.
- There are no assessment procedures.
- The subject leader has only a limited overview of the quality of provision.

Commentary

69. Standards and achievement in Year 2 are average but in Year 6 standards are a little below average, although pupils are making good progress and catching up lost ground. Achievement overall is satisfactory. Pupils are confident in using computers and apply their skills competently in other subjects, in research, data collection and recording. Their use of computers to monitor and control events is very limited because the school has had insufficient resources in these areas for older pupils. It has recognized this and these are now being purchased. Although pupils make good use of the Internet, they are inexperienced with using e-mail because of some concerns over security. There are firm plans to develop links with other schools to support learning, such as in geographical and historical topics.
70. Despite the fact that standards are still a little below average, there has been good improvement since the previous inspection. The subject has been a high priority and good leadership has led to much improved resources and training for teachers. As there is no room for a permanent computer suite, the school purchased a mobile laptop suite, which is used very well, although occasionally is unreliable. Teachers are now confident in teaching skills and using computers in lessons, particularly the laptops. They make good use of a laptop/projector link to demonstrate clearly to pupils what they are to learn and give pupils good levels of independence in their work. They use the laptop suite well in some literacy and numeracy lessons but not all yet use the classroom-based computers sufficiently in other subjects. This is compounded in the two older classes by the fact that the classroom computers are currently out of commission. Pupils enjoy their work on computers and develop very good attitudes to learning. They collaborate well and more confident pupils help the less confident, such as by guiding them through the next step.
71. Leadership has been effective in establishing a good curriculum, improved teaching and learning and satisfactory resources. Management is satisfactory but although resources are managed well, there is no assessment system to measure pupils' progress and little opportunity for the subject leader to gain an overview of the quality of provision and standards. The development of assessment procedures is a priority in this year's school development plan. Links with a local high school provide good opportunities for older pupils to extend their learning in regular lessons in a specialist suite.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

72. Teachers make good use of the laptop suite in some lessons in literacy and numeracy and classroom computers are used in some lessons for research and recording of work. However, this is not as frequent as it might be and is currently compounded by the fact that computers in Years 5 and 6 are temporarily out of commission. Pupils are competent in using computers and access programs and information confidently.

HUMANITIES

Provision for the humanities is **satisfactory** overall.

73. As it is early in the school year, insufficient work could be observed in history and geography to form overall judgements about the current quality of provision and standards. Teaching and learning were satisfactory in the one lesson observed in each subject and pupils achieved a satisfactory standard of work. A sound curriculum is enriched by a good range of visits to support learning. Work in pupils' books from the previous year showed that standards were average in both Years 2 and 6 and that pupils' achievement was satisfactory. However, the work showed that in several classes, there were insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in writing and ICT.
74. Religious education was subject to a separate inspection by the diocese.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Provision is **satisfactory** overall. Insufficient work was seen in design and technology and music to make overall decisions about provision and standards but that seen was satisfactory. This marks an improvement in design and technology since the previous inspection. At that time pupils made insufficient progress and standards were below average in Year 6, because teachers did not plan sufficiently to develop skills of design and evaluation progressively. The subject did not meet the full statutory requirements for the National Curriculum. The limited range of evidence available shows there has been satisfactory improvement and the subject now meets requirements. Pupils design and make products often linked to work in other subjects, such as music and science. Pupils present their products well, displaying pride in their achievements.

Art

Provision for art is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards of attainment are above those expected for pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- Pupils, including those with special educational needs, have positive attitudes and achieve well.
- Pupils' work develops well with increasing control over tools, media and form.
- Displays are attractive and reflect a wide range of skills and techniques.
- Visiting artists are used well to extend pupils' experiences.
- Art is well resourced and class teachers have ready access to good quality materials.
- Cross-curricular input from science and design and technology is good.
- Lack of use of sketchbooks to act as records of pupils' ongoing, quality of work.
- The lack of consistency of approach planning sheets is a weakness.
- There was no protection of tabletops and pupils' clothing in the lessons observed.

Commentary

75. Standards of work are above average by the end of Years 2 and 6 and pupils' achievement is good. There is a new and effective scheme of work, which gives detailed guidance for teachers on planning to develop knowledge and skills progressively. This provides for very good opportunities for pupils to use appropriate techniques and explore and investigate their feelings through their creativity. Pupils, including those with special educational needs enjoy tasks and their skills, techniques and knowledge develop well. The key elements of art and design are taught well and cross-curricular links, such as with science and design and technology are used effectively to enrich pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding. However, pupils make insufficient use of sketchbooks to practise and refine their skills.
76. The quality of teaching is good overall. It is particularly good where the specialist teacher's in-depth knowledge of the subject and enthusiastic approach are reflected in the planning and detailed preparation for lessons. Resources are used well to stimulate pupils' interest but in some lessons, insufficient attention is paid to protecting pupils' clothing and tabletops. Teachers celebrate pupils' success in displays that reflect a wide and interesting curriculum and promote their self-esteem very well.
77. The subject is led and managed well. There is a clear understanding of what the school does well and where improvements can still be made. For example, the school is planning for further development of assessment systems and a more consistent approach to the use of planning sheets and sketchbooks. Resources are very good, used very well and are readily at hand to extend pupils' experiences. The use of visiting experts enriches pupils' learning and stimulates their creative work well.

Physical Education

Provision for physical education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is good.
- Teachers plan interesting lessons and pupils enjoy taking part in them.
- The extra-curricular activities make a valuable contribution to the subject.
- In lessons the teachers do not evaluate good examples of movement and skills frequently enough with the pupils.
- There is no recorded assessment in the subject to help teachers plan work that challenges all pupils.

Commentary

78. It was only possible to observe four lessons, two in dance and two in gymnastics; no lessons were seen in Year 6. Therefore, there is insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement on standards and pupils' achievement. Pupils in Year 2 achieve satisfactorily and standards in dance are average. Standards in other lessons seen were also average and pupils made satisfactory progress. Records show that standards are sound in swimming, and most pupils swim the distance expected for this age group.
79. There is a good curriculum, which provides for the progressive development of a wide range of skills in all areas of the subject. Teachers have sound subject knowledge and use it well to provide interesting and enjoyable lessons. As a result pupils behave well, concentrate hard and produce good quality agile movements. Teachers have high expectations and set appropriate challenges for the pupils but in some lessons they do not evaluate good examples of movement frequently enough, in order to help pupils to improve their standards still further.
80. The leadership and management of the subject is satisfactory. It provides for a good curriculum and good resources but there is no whole school system of assessing and recording pupils' progress. Extra-curricular activities enrich learning. The pupils play competitive games including football, netball and rounders. The gym club provides good opportunities for pupils to gain national awards.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision in personal, social and health education and citizenship is **good**.

81. It was only possible to observe one lesson, in citizenship, during the inspection and no overall judgement can be made on teaching, learning or standards. In that lesson, teaching and learning were good and pupils displayed sound knowledge and very good attitudes to learning. Evidence from the programme of work and teachers' planning shows that there is a good curriculum to support pupils in their personal development. It includes sex education and education of the dangers of drug misuse and provides pupils with good information to help them make decisions about their own lives. Specific lessons are now a regular feature within the curriculum and are used effectively. They are based largely on oral work and pupils are given good opportunities to listen, think, and speak as they explore a variety of issues relevant to their own lives. They consider how to develop ideas about themselves and the way they live their life and deal with difficult situations that might arise, such as the consequences of aggressive behaviour.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	Grade
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	4
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	3
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	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	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
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
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	4

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