

# INSPECTION REPORT

## ST PAUL'S CE (VC) PRIMARY SCHOOL

York

LEA area: City of York

Unique reference number: 121474

Headteacher: Mrs S A Mistry

Lead inspector: Mr K Bardon

Dates of inspection: 6 – 8 October 2003

Inspection number: 257920

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 Controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	162
School address:	St Paul's Terrace York
Postcode:	YO24 4BJ
Telephone number:	01904 625240
Fax number:	01904 674878
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs A Cluderay
Date of previous inspection:	16 March 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St Paul's is a small primary school close to the centre of York. The housing surrounding the school is made up mainly of older terraced properties, most of which are owner-occupied. Almost three-fifths of the school's 162 pupils are girls. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average. Twenty-two pupils have special educational needs, mainly for moderate learning difficulties, which is an average figure for a school of this size. There are no pupils with a statement of special needs. A small number of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds but none is at an early stage of English acquisition. The school is part of the Holgate Early Years Partnership, along with a small number of nursery providers. Most children have the benefit of a nursery education and when they first join the reception class their attainment is generally around the level expected for their age. The school has been awarded Basic Skills Quality Mark, Activemark for the provision it makes in physical education and Artsmark for its creative arts curriculum.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
11807	Keith Bardon	Lead inspector	Science Design and technology Geography History Special educational needs English as an additional language
9984	Maureen Roscoe	Lay inspector	
11938	Sheridan Earnshaw	Team inspector	English Art and design Music Foundation stage
15474	John Fairclough	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Physical education Religious education

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **good school with a very positive ethos**. Standards in most subjects are high and pupils of all ages achieve well. Pupils enjoy their lessons and parents are happy that their children attend St Paul's. Teaching, learning, leadership and management are all good. The **value for money** the school provides is also **good**.

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

- Pupils' achievements in all aspects of English are good and standards are high.
- By Year 6 standards are above average in most subjects including mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT).
- The quality of teaching is good and pupils learn well.
- Good leadership and effective management give the school a clear sense of direction.
- Pupils develop very good attitudes to learning, behave very well and make major gains in their personal development.
- Teachers carry out thorough assessments but do not share the outcomes well enough with pupils.
- Effective provision is made for pupils with special educational needs and they make good progress.
- The provision made for children in the reception class gives them a secure start to school life.
- The school library is inadequate.
- Parents receive sufficient information but this is not always timely or easy for them to use in support of their children's learning.

Since the school was last inspected in 1998 its **rate of improvement has varied considerably**. **For a time**, in the middle of this period, **there was insufficient development** and the school's effectiveness declined. Over the last two years this slide has been reversed. **The school is** back on an even keel and **moving forwards again at a good pace**. Most of the issues from the last report have been addressed, but for reasons beyond the control of the school, library facilities remain inadequate.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*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.*

The majority of children in the Foundation Stage attain the goals children are expected to reach by the end of reception and a small proportion go beyond and on to the early parts of the National Curriculum. **The achievements of pupils in the reception class and in Years 1 to 6 are good and standards are generally above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6**. Pupils achieve well in all aspects of English and standards are high. The 2003 test results were in the top five per cent nationally. Test results in mathematics and science improved in 2003 and by Year 6 pupils' attainment in these two subjects is above average. However, lower down the school weaknesses that have occurred in mathematics in the past are taking some time to correct and by Year 2

standards are average. Pupils achieve well in information and communication technology, art and design, music, physical education and religious education and standards are above expectations. Pupils with special educational needs receive well structured support and make good progress. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are included fully in all aspects of learning and their achievement is good.

**Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good** and they develop into well-balanced, sociable and caring individuals. **Pupils** of all ages **show an enjoyment of learning** and readily contribute to and involve themselves in lessons and other activities. **Standards of behaviour are very high.** Pupils treat adults and other children with respect and **relationships are very good.** Rates of **attendance are well above average.**

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The school provides its pupils with a **good standard of education.**

**Teaching and learning** in the reception class and in Years 1 to 6 **are good.** Teachers make learning enjoyable by planning interesting work and giving pupils plenty of opportunities to involve themselves in the activities. Pupils respond well by concentrating on the task in hand and trying hard to achieve the objectives they have been set. Pupils' work is assessed thoroughly but teachers do not always pass sufficient information on to pupils about what they need to do next in order to improve. Teachers ask challenging questions which make pupils think deeply. Pupils give good quality answers and readily put forward their ideas in a sensible and constructive way.

The school provides a **good curriculum** which meets national requirements well. Literacy, numeracy and ICT are woven into all subjects so that pupils' learning in these key areas is continuous and not limited to English, mathematics and ICT lessons. Teachers give considerable thought to how best to deliver the curriculum and innovations, such as teaching some aspects of geography and history in intensive lesson blocks, add extra and worthwhile dimensions. Considering the size of the school, pupils of all ages are provided with a wide range of extra-curricular activities and frequent visits and visitors add much to lessons. The school's **links with parents are sound** although some of the information the school sends out is not always as clear or as well timed as it could be. Staff provide a **good level of care** for pupils and support their health and welfare well.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are **good.** The headteacher leads the school with commitment and purpose and with strong support from senior staff and governors, effectively promotes the school's mission statement of 'Equality with Excellence'. Management procedures are well established and efficient and the school runs smoothly. Those charged with managing the school have brought it successfully through a difficult period in which there have been many staff changes, and established a positive ethos which bodes well for the future. The governing body makes a good contribution to the life and work of the school and meets its statutory obligations well.

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

Parents are generally pleased with the standards of education the school provides for their children. Pupils are happy at school. They enjoy lessons and find staff and other pupils friendly and approachable.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Make better use of the information assessment provided to make pupils aware of the next steps in their learning.
- Take the opportunity presented by the impending building improvements to establish a fully functional school library.
- Improve the quality of information to parents so that they find it easier to use to support their children's learning.



## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

**Standards are above the national average** and from reception through to Year 6 pupils' achievement is good.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievements in all aspects of English are good and standards are high.
- By Year 6 standards are above average in mathematics and achievement is good. However, pupils' ability to use and apply what they know lags a little behind other aspects.
- Pupils achieve well in science and by Year 6 attain standards that are above average. The development of pupils' enquiry skills is slower up to Year 2 than it is in the following four years.
- Pupils' achievement in ICT is good and at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6 they attain above average standards.
- Standards in most of the other subjects, including religious education, are above expectations and pupils' achievement is good.
- Foundation Stage children achieve well in almost all the areas of learning.
- The achievements of pupils with special educational needs, pupils who speak English as an additional language and those who are capable of high attainment are good and mirror those of other pupils.

#### Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	17.3 (16.5)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	15.3 (15.6)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	16.8 (15.7)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 24 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

2. Pupils' performance in both reading and mathematics improved in 2003 with an increase in the average points score in both subjects. However, in comparison with national levels, results in mathematics remained lower than those in reading and writing. Results in the writing test have dipped slightly, because a smaller proportion of pupils reached the expected level. The test results present an accurate picture of the standards Year 2 pupils attain and represent a good level of achievement in English for pupils in Years 1 and 2. There are clear indications that while there is still some way to go, pupils' achievement in mathematics is continuing to improve as the school gets to grips with past problems. Currently, the attainment of Year 2 pupils is above average in the number aspect of the subject and broadly average in all other respects. This is a satisfactory level of achievement in mathematics overall.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	31.1 (29.3)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	28.3 (27.0)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	30.4 (28.8)	28.6 (28.3)

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*There were 23 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

3. 2003 test data shows that results in all three of the tested subjects have improved. Pupils' performance in English was particularly strong with almost three quarters attaining the higher level in the tests. Far more pupils attained the expected level in mathematics and a good proportion attained the higher level in science. These results correlate well with current standards, which are above average in all three of these subjects. Although this year's cohort of Year 6 pupils contains fewer pupils capable of high standards, and test results in English in particular are likely to be lower in 2004, pupils are making good gains in their learning and achieving well.

### **Other aspects of standards and achievement**

4. The school successfully achieved the overall target it set for pupils' performance in the 2003 English tests and exceeded by a considerable margin the target set for pupils reaching the higher level. However, in mathematics results fell short of the target for both the average and higher levels. These were challenging targets that were set some time ago using less information than is available now and at a time when the school was experiencing staff changes. The targets set for 2004 are equally challenging and will require a sustained effort on the part of both teachers and pupils if they are to be met.
5. Broadly speaking, standards are currently very similar to those pupils were attaining when the school was last inspected in 1998. However, this overview hides a dip in performance in the middle of this period, resulting from staffing changes, from which the school has only just recovered. After rising for several years, the school's results in the national reading and writing tests for Year 2 pupils fell steeply in 2002. In mathematics, results had been falling for some time. The unconfirmed 2003 results have reversed the fall in reading and mathematics but not in writing. The school has put measures in place to correct the trend in writing which are giving every indication of working successfully. Year 6 results in English have shown a consistent pattern of good standards, with a further rise in 2003. The trend in science results is also positive with the school's results mirroring the rise that has occurred nationally, and improving again in 2003. Results in mathematics fell steeply in 2001 and again the following year, from well above average in 2000 to around the national average in 2002. The 2003 results show that pupils' performance has returned to an acceptable level but there is still some way to go before it climbs all the way back to the high levels pupils have achieved in the past.
6. Most children enter the reception class with a broadly average range of basic skills. During their time in the reception class children achieve well in almost all areas of learning and with a few exceptions attain the Early Learning Goals (the goals children are expected to reach by the end of reception) before they move into Year 1. Pupils' physical development is satisfactory but not as good as their achievement in other areas because they get fewer opportunities to learn.
7. The school has put a concerted effort into ICT and pupils' achievement in the subject is good. They are confident and competent with the technology and at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6 pupils attain above average standards. Standards in art and design, music and religious education are above expectations and throughout the school pupils' achievement is good. Pupils in Years 4 to 6 also achieve well in physical education. There were no physical education lessons seen in the other age groups and a judgement about the achievements of the younger pupils in this subject cannot be made.
8. Pupils with special educational needs receive effective support for their learning and achieve well. The rate of progress they maintain compares favourably with that of all other pupils. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are included fully in all lessons and their achievements are good. Those pupils capable of high levels of attainment are appropriately challenged which helps ensure that they achieve a good rate of progress.

## Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to school are **very good**. The high standard of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development enables pupils to build **very good personal qualities**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour in lessons and around the school are very good.
- The playground is free of bullying and pupils are kind to each other.
- Relationships at all levels are very good.
- Children in the reception class settle quickly into their routines and quickly grow in confidence;
- Attendance levels are much higher than the average.
- The school provides pupils with the opportunity to show enterprise and responsibility.

### Commentary

9. Pupils behave very well because teachers and supervisory staff insist on good behaviour and because they have a clear understanding of what is socially acceptable and what is not. Staff apply reward and sanction procedures consistently but sensitively and take time to explain why a particular action is requested or not allowed. Consequently, pupils' self-discipline is developed well because they understand the consequences of their own decisions and behaviour.

### Exclusions

#### *Ethnic background of pupils*

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

#### *Exclusions in the last school year*

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
130	0	0
2	0	0
1	0	0
3	0	0
3	0	0

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

10. Playtimes or health breaks are pleasantly harmonious because pupils of different ages and genders mix happily together. They organise games and use the climbing frame in ways that involve others. Older pupils look after and play with the younger pupils at every opportunity and in a way that gives pleasure to both.

### Attendance

#### *Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 95.5%*

Authorised absence	
School data	4.2
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.3
National data	0.5

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



11. Pupils enjoy their lessons. This is reflected fully in the high levels of attendance. They interact well with teachers and other pupils using good social and listening skills. They value fairness, take turns and help others. For example, pupils in Year 6 are keen to share and pass on tips that enable friends to overcome problems when using the computer. Pupils add to the quality of discussion during class times by asking sensible questions and making useful contributions. They often interject with a polite 'may I ask you something'. This level of cooperation and courtesy in classrooms improves pupils' learning considerably and adds much to the ambience of the classroom.
12. Pupils' personal development is very good and characterised by the mutual respect and the compassion pupils show to others, particularly younger pupils and those less fortunate than themselves. Staff treat pupils kindly, sharing humour easily, and encouraging them to follow their very good examples. The school successfully promotes a strong sense of community, and the curriculum in the form of art or geography activity days adds a further dimension.
13. Pupils are taught about the values and beliefs of others. Pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds are fully included in play and class activities and in the strong friendship groups that form. They confirm that they do not suffer racial abuse or harassment and remark on the respect other pupils show during assemblies when diverse traditions and cultures are discussed. Teachers and support staff make careful provision for pupils with special educational needs which ensure that they are fully included in the life of the school. The success that these and other pupils achieve and the praise they are given for their efforts does much for their confidence and self-esteem. As a result pupils grow into confident young people with appropriate personal and social values.
14. The school ensures the smooth induction of reception children into classroom routines. Repeat visits to the school prior to starting ensure children are familiar with staff and ready to build on the relationships they have begun to form. At this early point in the term reception children are responding promptly to adults, playing cooperatively with their classmates and learning happily in the warm atmosphere that staff provide.
15. Pupils can be trusted to do things on their own and through the school council they are able to contribute to the direction the school takes and the decisions that the school makes. Pupils value these opportunities and feel proud that the staff have this confidence in them. Many of these positive features of the school were reported at the time of the last inspection and have been maintained.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

The school provides its pupils with a **good** quality of education.

### **Teaching and learning**

The quality of teaching and learning is **good** for pupils of all ages. Teachers assess pupils' work **thoroughly** and **accurately**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Lessons are interesting and well planned and the work pupils are set encourages them to participate and learn.
- Pupils listen attentively, think carefully and work hard to achieve objectives they have been set.
- Teachers assess pupils' work and progress regularly and use the information constructively to aid their lesson planning. However, the information from assessment and from the marking of work is not used well enough to make pupils aware of what they need to learn next.

- The very good relationships teachers establish with pupils generate a productive atmosphere in lessons.
- Teachers generally ask well structured questions and give pupils plenty of opportunities to put forward ideas although at times opportunities to challenge the thinking of the highest attainers are missed.
- Children are taught well in the reception class.
- Pupils with special educational needs receive well structured support from teachers and teaching assistants and learn well.
- Teachers give clear and detailed instructions and demonstrations although on occasions these go on too long.

## Commentary

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 36 lessons*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	5 (14%)	24 (67%)	7 (19%)	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.*

16. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school and particularly effective in Year 1 where the transition of pupils from the play based activities of the reception curriculum onto the more formal work of the National Curriculum is very well managed. In all classes, teachers give careful thought to what they want pupils to learn and plan their lessons thoroughly. As a result lessons move smoothly from one element to the next as pupils pursue the clear objectives they have been set. Activities are selected, not only on their educational merit but also on the level of interest they will generate. Pupils come into class curious to find out what they will be doing next and ready to involve themselves fully in whatever the teacher has planned for them. They pay close attention to what is said to them and concentrate hard on the tasks they are set. These positive features of classroom activity provide a solid platform for learning.
17. In most lessons teachers ask well structured questions which make pupils think and give them plenty of opportunities to contribute their own ideas. Pupils respond well by answering sensibly and thoughtfully and by politely asking for clarification if they do not understand. The very good relationships that teachers build with their pupils ensure that standards of behaviour in class are high and create an atmosphere in which pupils feel confident to ask their own questions in the knowledge that they will receive a positive response. On occasions, teachers accept a relatively simple answer from a pupil and move on without exploring fully where the answer has come from and what lies behind it. When this happens, opportunities to develop the thinking skills of pupils, particularly the higher attainers, are missed.
18. Lesson usually start well with teachers giving a clear picture of what pupils are to do and what it is expected they will learn. Effective demonstrations add to pupils' understanding and pupils start their work with a secure understanding of how to go about the tasks they have been set. Occasionally, the teacher spends too long on the introduction and time that could be used for pupils to work individually is lost.
19. Teachers mark pupils' work conscientiously but do not always make full use of the opportunities this presents. In the best marking teachers provide models of what pupils should be aiming for, giving them a clear picture of how to improve. However, marking mostly indicates what has been done correctly (or otherwise) and gives praise for the achievement. While this goes some way towards making pupils aware of what they are getting right it gives them few ideas of where they need to be aiming next.

20. Assessment procedures are thorough and teachers make clear and accurate judgements of the standards pupils are attaining. This information is used well to ensure that the work planned for pupils fits their needs and builds progressively on what they have learned previously. However, this information is not shared well enough with the pupils and opportunities to give individuals or groups of pupils a clear vision of the next steps in their learning are missed.
21. The good quality teaching children receive in the reception class provides them with a secure start to school life. A wide range of play based activities, covering all areas of learning, encourage children's participation, stimulate their curiosity and promote an early enjoyment of learning. Some aspects of physical development are not planned as well as the rest of the curriculum and in this area of learning teaching is satisfactory rather than good.
22. Teachers and teaching assistants work well as a team, particularly in support of pupils with special educational needs. The work provided for these pupils is planned thoroughly to ensure that it matches their needs and reflects the targets in their individual education plans. Teachers and teaching assistants know the pupils well and respond to their individual difficulties with sensitivity and skill. Pupils appreciate the help they receive and try hard to produce work of a good standard. This positive approach from teachers, teaching assistants and pupils helps to ensure that a good pace of learning is maintained.

## **The curriculum**

Curriculum provision is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The provision is broad and links subjects together well.
- The provision of literacy and numeracy across the curriculum is good.
- The curriculum provides equal opportunities for all groups of pupils.
- ICT is well integrated into subjects.
- The Foundation Stage curriculum covers most of the areas of learning well
- There is good provision for personal, social and health education (PSHE) and it is planned well.
- The curriculum is enriched by a wide range of visits and visitors.
- The extra-curricular provision covers a wide range of activities.
- Pupils are well prepared when they move to the next stage of their education.
- The library is very small and not easily accessed.
- There is limited access for physical development in the Foundation Stage.

## **Commentary**

23. The Foundation Stage curriculum provides a wide range of activities, both indoors and outdoors. The curriculum for this age group incorporates both whole-class and individual activities that place due emphasis on the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. Although the outdoor space directly linked to the reception classroom is small, good use is made of it. However, this space places severe limitations on what can be provided for physical development. At present, the reception class uses the main playground one morning each week for physical activities, but does not use the hall, although it is planned to timetable sessions in the hall at a later date. The curriculum in this area of learning is only being partially covered.
24. The curriculum for Years 1 to 6 is good. It fulfils statutory requirements and provision for religious education is good. Since the last inspection there has been satisfactory improvement overall and good improvement in some subjects, such as ICT. Literacy and numeracy are incorporated well into different subjects across the school. For example, pupils



write reports of good quality about their science investigations and they use numbers well to sequence events in history. The curriculum is broad and good links are made between different subjects. For example, when looking at bus journeys in geography, pupils carry out data handling and write instructions about how to get to various places. The school's efforts to integrate ICT into other subjects have met with a good measure of success. ICT features regularly in many lessons in different subjects.

25. The school is not afraid to innovate. At present, some aspects of geography and history are being taught as intensive blocks of lessons to give pupils an opportunity to see a project through from start to finish in a relatively short time. This development is in its early stages and it is too early to make a full evaluation of its success. However, there is little doubt that pupils enjoy working in this way and the signs are encouraging.
26. The provision for personal, social, health and citizenship education is good. The school has adopted the national scheme and it is planned and timetabled each week in every class. The teaching of the subject has encouraged a wide range of initiatives, such as reading friends, which are having a positive effect and pupils are being asked to provide ideas on wider issues. The school is shortly to receive the 'Healthy Schools Award' because of its work in this area. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Teachers match the curriculum well to their needs. The small minority of pupils who speak English as an additional language are well catered for in lessons.
27. The curriculum is enhanced by visits outside the school. The locality is used very well and frequent visits are made for instance, to the Castle Museum in the city to support the provision in history or to the River Ouse in order to develop art work. There are frequent visitors to the school to work with pupils. Peripatetic music teachers teach pupils how to play a variety of instruments including steel pans and keyboards. This provision enables pupils to become confident when performing in front of others. Musicians and artists are regular visitors who work with pupils and teach a variety of skills. There is a good range of activities planned outside the school day. These activities are well attended and are on offer to both infant and junior pupils.
28. Pupils are well prepared for moving on to the next stage of education. Younger pupils in reception visit the Year 1 class before they move into the infants and the teacher visits them in reception. The curriculum planned in Year 1, which is based partly on the areas of learning and on the National Curriculum, provides a smooth transition from one phase of education to the next.
29. The accommodation in the school is limited but the best use is made of all the available space. However, there is little space for physical activities outside the reception class and the small library is situated in the hall and not easily accessed by pupils. The space originally designated as a library has had to be used as a classroom and the school has been unable to address this key issue from the last inspection. The planned improvements to the building will provide that opportunity in the not too distant future.

### **Care, guidance and support**

The school makes **good provision** for pupils' care, welfare and health and safety and staff monitor and guide pupils' development **conscientiously**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The health and safety concerns previously highlighted in the last inspection report have been addressed.
- Pupils feel that they have good and trusting relationships with all adults in the school.

- Effective induction paves the way for very good links between home and school.
- Good systems are in place to monitor pupils' progress but pupils could be given more information to aid their progress.
- Pupils know that they are listened to but formal consultation to help ascertain pupils' needs is under-developed.

### **Commentary**

30. Staff have created a supportive environment in which pupils thrive. Teachers are well aware of safety considerations related to their teaching and take due care to follow them. Parents are pleased with the quality of care extended to their children from their earliest days in school by all staff. Welfare facilities are good and reflected in the quality of first aid treatments when minor accidents occur. Parents are confident that their children like school and are treated fairly. Pupils agree, and when asked what they like about school describe its friendly atmosphere in which they feel able to seek the help they need and advice from teachers and support staff.
31. Classroom assistants encourage and guide pupils well in and out of lessons. Some have a dual role as midday assistants, which extends their contact with pupils well. They, along with the other members of the lunchtime team, are alert to their duties and sensible in their approach to the welfare of the pupils. Teachers know their pupils well. They monitor progress systematically and collect informative data on their achievements. However, this information is not used well enough to guide pupils in their learning. Effective strategies are in place to identify pupils who have special educational needs and the individual education plans that are written to guide and aid their learning are clear and effective. The systems that are in place to support these pupils function well and their progress is closely monitored.
32. Teaching staff are aware of any concerns pupils may have and deal with them quickly as they arise. Health breaks are built into the school day to give pupils 'breathing spaces' and the opportunity to raise matters if there is something that they would like to discuss. This system effectively 'nips in the bud' any potential issues and underpins parental confidence in the school's zero tolerance towards bullying.
33. Through the school council, pupils have opportunities to comment on and make a contribution to school life. Their views are sought and suggestions taken seriously. They speak with pleasure of how they influenced the design of the adventure playground that has recently been erected. However, regular procedures for eliciting the views of all pupils have yet to be established.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents support the school's high aspirations for their children and are pleased to see them develop into well-rounded confident youngsters.
- Parents are very pleased with the arrangements made to introduce children to school and to help them settle into the reception class.
- The school provides a range of information but does not check if it is of practical use to parents.
- Regular visits and visitors from the community contribute well to pupils' personal development.
- Liaison with receiving secondary schools is good and links with other schools are effective.

## Commentary

34. Pupils gain much from the good links with other educational establishments. Visiting teachers, artists and musicians enhance pupils' learning in a variety of ways and help to provide continuity when pupils move into secondary education.
35. Parents feel the school builds children's confidence from the outset by supporting them very well in their initial introduction to school life. They are also very pleased with the teaching, the care and the support that they say contributes so much to their children's personal development. Parents commented that children's anxieties are handled 'wisely and well' because of the effective systems in place for pastoral care. Many parents strongly welcome the way in which pupils are encouraged to do their best at all times, and are pleased that their children recognise that this is the standard they and the staff expect.
36. Parents support the school well and regularly take up the invitations they receive to attend the many events. Sometimes they offer their expertise in lessons, help supervise pupils when they are out of school or engage in fund-raising initiatives. Many parents find it very easy to approach staff to discuss matters important to them. They consider they are well informed about general matters of interest, although some explain that they feel excluded from planned events because of late notification of dates on which these are held. Parents find it difficult in these circumstances to re-arrange domestic or work commitments.
37. Most parents agree they are kept informed on their child's progress, but some raised important issues that for them were barriers to full involvement in their children's education. These were about the usefulness of progress reports and the clarity of the other information they receive about what is going on in class and the work pupils are involved in. At times these are written in language that is not easy to follow or presented in a way that may make sense to a teacher but is much more difficult for a parent. The school is aware that it needs to continue to develop its links with parents and has identified this as an area for future consideration.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The school is led and managed **well**.

The quality of leadership is **good**.

The quality of management is **good**.

The quality of governance is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school's mission statement 'Equality and Excellence' is reflected strongly in all its work.
- The headteacher provides the school with strong leadership.
- Effective management strategies are in place and the school runs smoothly.
- School development is planned thoroughly and effectively, although there tends to be too much paperwork.
- Governors support and monitor the work of the school diligently and constructively.
- The enthusiasm and competence of subject managers and the very good professional development for all staff have a clear and positive effect on the quality of education pupils receive.
- The school's finances are managed efficiently.

### Commentary

38. The headteacher provides the school with clear and purposeful leadership. She has successfully led the school through a period of difficulty and with the help of senior staff and governors brought it back to the good level of performance reported during the last inspection in 1998. Through the careful appointment and support of new staff, an enthusiastic team of teaching and support staff has been constructed which shows a strong commitment to the raising of standards. As a result pupils' achievements are rising steadily and staff have the confidence and willingness to try new and innovative ways of teaching. The school's mission statement of 'Equality with Excellence' is promoted well and is clearly visible in all its work and in the manner in which pupils' achievement and their personal development are fostered. Management procedures work well and the school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis.
39. Development planning is extensive and thorough. All subject and aspect managers construct detailed action plans and these are incorporated into the whole-school development plan. Performance management targets focus on raising attainment and link effectively with the school improvement plan. This helps to ensure that all staff have a clear understanding of the school's priorities for development and are able to play a constructive part in meeting its objectives. However, it is some time since the format and structure of the development plans have been thoroughly reviewed and they have become rather paper intensive. Consequently, key information is not easy to extract and identifying just how successful different initiatives are proving is more difficult than it might be. Subject management is good. Coordinators have appropriately delegated responsibilities for their subjects and carry out the work diligently. New ideas and creative thinking are encouraged and as a result the school provides an interesting curriculum for its pupils. The good management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs ensures that these pupils receive the support they need and are able to make good progress.
40. The chair and vice chair of governors maintain close contact with the school and forge a constructive link with the local community. The effective committee structure ensures that governors are kept well informed about developments in the school and that decisions are only taken after due discussion and consideration of the available information. The governors fulfil their statutory duties conscientiously, including those relating to special educational needs, race equality, and disability and sex education. Performance data is used well by the

governors to set appropriate targets for pupils' attainment. Identification of other priorities for school development is carried out mainly by senior staff and while governors monitor the progress of the school closely, their role in determining what the development plan should contain is somewhat low key. Governors have a clear picture of the school's strengths and areas for development. They provide a good level of support for senior staff and challenge the school's performance accordingly.

41. The quality of teaching and learning is evaluated regularly by senior staff and assessment data is analysed comprehensively. This provides a secure base for decision making and helps staff to determine the direction their personal development should take. The procedures by which school development is linked to budget spending and supported by continual professional development of staff, function effectively and give the school a firm platform for its work.
42. Financial management is good and funds are administered efficiently. The school has carried a large surplus in its budget for some years in the hope that matched funding will become available to improve the accommodation. This has proved a sensible strategy and building plans are now in hand for the new classroom the school needs. Part of the surplus is being used to enhance staffing to keep class sizes at a reasonable level and to provide well-trained support assistants throughout the school. This is having a positive impact on pupils' achievements and represents an efficient use of funds. The governors and school management use most principles of best value well but have yet fully to develop consultation procedures with parents in a way that would help them to give maximum support to their children.

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	389,732
Total expenditure	381,969
Expenditure per pupil	2,358

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	102,017
Balance carried forward to the next	109,780

43. St Paul's has recently been acknowledged as a 'Healthy School' by the local education authority. This says much for the good, all round education it provides and for the effectiveness of management and governance. A secure platform for development has been laid and with the focused leadership and management that is now in place, it should continue to develop to the benefit of all pupils.

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

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

The quality of education provided for children in the Foundation Stage is **good** and sound improvements have been made since the last inspection.

At present there are eight full-time children and fifteen part-time children in the reception class. The autumn born children attend full-time and the children with spring and summer birthdays attend part-time. All children will become full-time after Christmas. This is a new arrangement which began a few weeks ago.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- By the end of reception the majority of children attain the Early Learning Goals in all the areas of learning.
- Children's achievement is good.
- Teaching is good and activities provided have clear objectives.
- The curriculum is good and covers all the areas of learning both indoors and outdoors.
- Children are carefully assessed and the information used well to inform planning.
- There is good emphasis on teaching the basic skills of literacy and numeracy.
- Provision for physical development is limited at present.
- The teaching assistant is used well to promote children's learning.
- There is a good range of resources.

### **Commentary**

44. The quality of teaching is good. The teacher is managing both full and part-time children well and is organising activities that suit the needs of both. Children are made to feel comfortable and secure and their learning is made enjoyable and fun. There is a good mixture of focused activities where children are brought together as a class or a group with the teacher and independent tasks where children make choices about what they are going to do. The teaching assistant ably assists in the mornings, working with children outdoors, supporting them in achieving the tasks set for them and teaching them new skills.
45. Literacy and numeracy are taught particularly well. Skills children are taught as a class are often followed up in independent activities such as learning letter sounds or counting. Planning for all the areas of learning is detailed and care is taken to ensure that there are suitable activities provided both indoors and outdoors.
46. Curriculum provision is good and children acquire the appropriate skills. However, provision for physical development is limited at the moment as there is very little space in the outdoor area. Children have access to the main playground one morning a week to use bicycles and other large equipment. At present the hall is not timetabled for the reception class for physical activities although it will be later in the term. Children are carefully assessed throughout their time in the reception class. The information gathered is used well to plan further activities for groups or individuals. Observations are made regularly by both the teacher and teaching assistant to track pupils' progress towards the early learning goals. The reception classroom is well organised and provides an attractive and inviting environment. Children are provided with a good range of resources to assist their learning.

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

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

### **Commentary**

47. Children have quickly settled into school and have a good understanding of classroom routines. For example, they know that they have to sit in a circle on the carpet at snack time and choose a piece of fruit. They respond well to each other and to other adults. Quite a number of the older children work alongside others, discussing what they are doing amicably. Some younger children are happy to work independently at the moment and have still to learn these social skills. All children know what is expected of them and follow instructions well. At the end of activities children show a good sense of responsibility by helping to sweep up the sand from the sand tray, tidy away construction toys and put their paintings into the correct tray.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **good** and pupils achieve well.

### **Commentary**

48. Teachers give children frequent opportunities to speak in front of the class. As a result many are becoming confident speakers, fully prepared to talk about things they have brought into school or to introduce themselves to everyone when it is their turn to hold a soft toy. They listen attentively to the teacher and to each other. Children enjoy looking at books, often taking them into the indoor or outdoor tents, which act as quiet areas. When listening to stories told by the teacher such as 'Nigel's Numberless World' they are inquisitive and ask questions connected to the story. They learn the sounds of different letters and attempt to read the words starting with the letter sound. Many are able to match pictures and sounds. Children use the many areas available for mark making spontaneously and many can already write their name correctly.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **good** and children achieve well.

### **Commentary**

49. There are a wide range of activities in which children can develop their knowledge of numbers and skills of counting. Most children know the numbers to ten and higher attainers can start counting from a different number each time. In a sorting activity children place objects with three, four or no corners in the correct hoop, with a good proportion succeeding with some help from the teacher. The 'baker's shop' area, which has been set up in the classroom, provides good opportunities for children to learn to count. Children can count the number of buns or gingerbread men they are going to sell with the recipient giving the correct number of pennies as payment. In the sand children look for 'treasure' and count the number of pennies they find, trying to see who can count the most.

## KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

### Commentary

50. Children are able to build various simple models using a range of construction toys. While building a 'pirate ship' they construct a slope in order to roll objects down into the 'ship' and are developing a good understanding of shape and structure. They get into the spirit of the activity by using tools such as safe saws and wearing builder's hats. Many children are able to sustain the activities for long periods and can make careful observations. When using the computer children control the mouse well to move the arrow around the screen.

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **sound** and children's achievement is satisfactory.

### Commentary

51. Children develop appropriate fine motor skills and are able to handle pencils and paint brushes appropriately and well. With help, many can manipulate the controls of a remote control car and link what they are doing with what is happening to the car. There is no hall time at present to develop physical skills further and there is only one opportunity a week for children to use large equipment. Pupils' control over their own actions when making large movements is satisfactory but not as good as their other basic skills.

## CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good** and children achieve well.

### Commentary

52. Coloured pens, pencils and paint are constantly available for children to draw and paint. They use pens and pencils carefully to draw pictures and use a variety of colours when painting. A few children are able to paint recognisable pictures, such as a boy who painted his friend in the class but others are still at the stage of exploring different colours on paper. Children enjoy musical activities and make a variety of sounds outside with the pots and pans on the washing line. All children enjoy singing and join in well with the songs on the tape recorder. They particularly enjoy the action songs.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

### ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good** and there has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievement is good and standards are above average.
- Throughout the school the teaching and learning are good.
- The national strategy for literacy is firmly embedded in teaching and learning.
- There are good strategies in place to maintain high standards.
- By Year 6 pupils develop a good range of writing styles.
- Spelling is good in both infant and junior classes.
- There are good literacy links across the curriculum.



- ICT is integrated well into literacy lessons.
- The subject is managed well.
- Pupils receive too little information from teachers' marking and assessments.
- The inadequate library places limitations on pupils' reading.

## Commentary

53. Standards are above average in speaking and listening, reading and writing at Year 2 and Year 6. This is slightly below recent test results for the older pupils because the current cohort of Year 6 pupils contains fewer pupils capable of working at an above average level. There is however, no drop in achievement, and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are learning at a good pace. Teachers provide challenging work and pupils' English books show marked progress from the beginning of the year to the end. Unusually, there is very little difference in the attainment of boys and girls.
54. Pupils develop good speaking and listening skills because they are given plenty of opportunities to listen to one another during lessons and encouraged to forward their views. For example, Year 6 pupils discussing a newspaper article on bullying were confident enough to say that they disagreed with others in the class and were happy to give the reasons why. The opportunities teachers create for pupils to share ideas and the teaching of correct vocabulary throughout the school produces articulate pupils who express themselves well.
55. The teaching of reading is good and pupils learn to read fluently and with understanding. In the Years 1 and 2 pupils are taught key reading skills, such as how to use correct letter sounds and the strategies to use to tackle words they do not know. Pupils' enjoyment of books is extended when they read interesting and amusing books such as 'Owl Babies' with the teacher. During these lessons teachers take the opportunities to discuss the text and to ask pupils questions about what they have read. Such activities enhance pupils' understanding and help them to acquire good comprehension skills. Pupils concentrate well and listen carefully to instructions given by the teacher. Pupils develop a taste for a range of books; some of the older pupils have quite sophisticated tastes in the books they choose. They can discuss and give well considered reasons why they enjoy certain types of books and can identify the writing styles of different authors.
56. At present the library is situated in the hall and contains only non-fiction books. Although each junior class is timetabled to use it each week it is difficult for pupils to access books at other times and there is little opportunity for teachers to help pupils to develop research and library skills. Building work planned for the school should provide the opportunity to rectify this unsatisfactory situation.
57. Writing skills are developed well across the school. As pupils move through the school they are taught a variety of writing styles and by Year 6 pupils move confidently from one to another depending on the context in which they are working. Pupils are taught a wide range of vocabulary which they put to good use when writing descriptively. In a piece about Sir Francis Drake, one Year 6 pupil wrote, '*These were fine ships but they were separated in a catastrophic storm*'. Pupils acquire a distinctive range of handwriting styles and are able to write clearly and quickly, after carefully planning their work beforehand. The accuracy of pupils' spelling significantly enhances the quality of their writing and makes the content easy and pleasant to read.
58. Teaching is good in all classes. The interesting and often imaginative activities teachers provide stimulate pupils' thinking and motivate them to learn. Pupils with special educational needs are catered for well. The work they are given reflects the targets in their education plans and they receive good support from teaching assistants in lessons. Teaching assistants work closely with teachers and have a good understanding of what is to be taught. In-depth discussions take place between the pupils and the teaching assistants so that pupils know

exactly what they are required to do. Information and communication technology is integrated well into literacy lessons and constitutes an effective learning aid. Teachers choose the software carefully, linking it appropriately to the lesson objectives.

59. Work in pupils' books is marked conscientiously but too often teachers concentrate too much on correcting spelling or punctuation. Only occasionally do teachers provide pupils with the information they need in order to improve. Similarly, teachers' assessment is thorough but the information this generates is not used well enough to make pupils aware of what they need to learn next.
60. Subject management is good and the coordinator uses effective procedures to monitor the provision that the school is making for pupils' learning. Decisions about the future direction of the subject are based on reliable information and detailed analysis. Good strategies are in place for continuous improvement and to maintain high standards.

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

61. Language and literacy are used and developed well across the curriculum. Teachers insist on the same high standards of literacy in all subjects as they would expect in an English lesson. Writing is developed well across the curriculum, for example in geography where pupils express their views well on environmental issues and in religious education when they write good accounts of a Sikh pilgrimage.

## **MATHEMATICS**

The provision for mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' achieve well and by the end of Year 6 standards are above average.
- The teaching is good and challenges pupils to higher attainment.
- Pupils' ability to use and apply their mathematics is not developed as well as other aspects of their work.
- The mathematics coordinator provides good subject management.
- Pupils' development is monitored closely to ensure they are making sufficient progress.
- Teachers make effective use of assessment data to aid their planning but do not use it as well to indicate to pupils what they need to learn next.
- Pupils show very good attitudes and work hard.
- Good use is made of ICT to aid pupils' learning.

### **Commentary**

62. Standards are above expectations for Year 6 pupils and in line with expectations for Year 2 pupils. Pupils' performance in the national tests had been falling but there was an upturn this year and a distinct improvement in the results of both Year 2 and Year 6 pupils. There is every indication that these improvements are being maintained. The school has, for the most part, overcome the problems which were depressing standards and pupils' achievement is on the increase. Taking into account the variations in performance since the last inspection, improvement is satisfactory.
63. While the majority of the current cohort of Year 6 are working around the expected level for their age a minority of higher attaining pupils are attaining above and on occasions well above the level expected. Although fewer pupils than last year are working at an above average level this represents good achievement for this cohort of pupils. Year 2 pupils are comfortably working at the expected level of attainment and in some lessons a majority attain above the

expected level. However, this is mainly in number skills and in the other aspects of the subject standards are broadly average. This equates to a satisfactory rate of achievement by Year 2 but with clear signs of an upward trend.

64. Pupils enjoy their mathematics lessons. They work hard, concentrate well and complete a high volume of work. Instructions are followed attentively, behaviour is very good and pupils of all ages show a high level of interest in the task they are set. Pupils respond quickly and accurately to teachers well judged questions and readily put forward their own ideas.
65. Teaching and learning are good overall with some very good teaching in both infants and juniors. Where the teaching is very good, teachers use secure subject knowledge to plan and deliver interesting lessons with a challenging style that engages and keeps the attention of the pupils. In a lesson for Year 1 pupils the teacher used a glove puppet that could not count reliably to strengthen pupils' understanding of the counting sequence to twenty. Information for communication technology is used well to support learning in many lessons. Teachers use large inter-active displays generated by a computer to illustrate mathematical ideas clearly and to present a range of situations in which understanding can be developed. The less successful aspects of lessons are often related to the use of commercial worksheets. While these often provide sufficient support for pupils' learning of basic calculation methods the investigations they contain are not linked well enough to real situations. While higher attainers are able to gain from solving these problems, average and lower attaining pupils have difficulty identifying with the abstract nature of the challenge. Pupils' ability to use and apply their knowledge and understanding is the weakest element of their attainment and is generally around the level expected rather than above average.
66. Leadership and management of mathematics are good. A positive approach is driving the subject forward. Through the careful and systematic analysis of assessment information pupils' progress is carefully tracked and outcomes used constructively to identify areas of learning for development. Professional development is focused on school priorities so that teaching and standards are improving. Challenging targets for national tests and class performance are set and teachers review these regularly to ensure pupils are moving systematically towards them. Assessments of how well pupils are doing are made regularly and thoroughly but this information is not used well enough to give pupils a clear picture of the next steps in their learning.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

67. Numeracy is used well to aid pupils' learning in other subjects and to extend their understanding on numbers and how to use them. In science, for example, pupils frequently use measuring instruments while investigating, record the information they are collecting in tables and present data as charts and graphs. In history, pupils' understanding of numbers is extended through the sequence of events and in geography pupils learn to give directions accurately using compass points.

### **SCIENCE**

The provision for science is **good**.

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

- Standards are above average by Year 6 and pupils' achievements are good.
- Pupils acquire a good range of enquiry skills and build a secure understanding of the key ideas of science.
- The quality of teaching is good overall; most of work provides pupils with a high level of challenge and encourages them to think for themselves although occasionally teachers do too much for pupils.

- Pupils' understanding of what constitutes a conclusion or how to draw one is under-developed.
  - Assessment is thorough and accurate but in general the information gained is not used well enough to indicate to pupils the next steps in their learning.
  - Pupils use scientific equipment competently and accurately.
  - Effective use is made of literacy to aid pupils' learning.
  - The subject is managed well.
68. Pupils' performance in the 2003 National Curriculum tests for Year 6 pupils was good. Almost all pupils attained the level expected and well over half reached the above average level. Pupils currently in Year 6 are working hard but there are fewer higher attaining pupils in the group and it is unlikely that quite so many will attain the upper level when they sit the tests next year. However, standards by Year 6 are above expectations and across the school as a whole, pupils are achieving well.
69. By Year 6, most pupils are confident investigators with above average understanding of how to plan and carry out a scientific test. In the majority of classes teachers challenge pupils to plan and carry out scientific tests and set them interesting and searching questions to answer. Pupils enjoy this approach and relish the opportunity to think and make decisions for themselves. As a result they gain a secure understanding of key principles, such as how to carry out a fair test and how to evaluate the data they have collected. The final step now needs to be put in place by staff teaching pupils how to draw informed conclusions from the data they are collecting. This is a difficult skill to learn but will add the final piece into a well developed skills jigsaw. During their investigations pupils use scientific equipment, such as thermometers and balances, with skill and accuracy. This helps ensure that the information they are collecting is reliable and can be utilised effectively.
70. Although the teaching is good overall, there is some variation in how well teachers promote pupils' enquiry skills. A secure start is made in Year 1 and progress continues at a productive rate through Years 4 to 6. The teaching in Years 2 and 3 is sound but tends to focus more on pupils acquiring factual information. Pupils are given the opportunity to participate in some investigations, but these tend to be teacher led, and do not provide the same opportunities for pupils to make decisions as they receive in other classes. Consequently, Year 2 pupils have better factual knowledge than enquiry skills. The quality of teachers' questioning is generally good and stretches pupils' thinking. On some occasions teachers ask 'what' question but do not following these up with 'why' and opportunities mentally to stretch pupils capable of the highest attainment are missed.
71. Frequent and detailed assessments give teachers a clear understanding of the progress pupils are making and what the teaching needs to focus upon next. This information is not utilised fully to keep pupils abreast of their learning or to give them guidance on the next steps in their learning. The good literacy skills that many pupils develop are used well in science. Teachers encourage the detailed recording of information and this helps pupils to consolidate their ideas and to formulise their thoughts before proceeding with a test.
72. The conscientious subject manager monitors the school's provision closely and keeps a close check on the effectiveness of teaching and learning. Sound improvements have been made since the last inspection and after an initial fall there has been an upward trend in test results. Management strategies have been strengthened and the school has a clear vision of what is going well and what is in need of further development.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils throughout the school achieve well and standards are above average.
- The teaching is good throughout the school.
- Pupils show very good attitudes to the subject and behave very well.
- There is good subject development led by an enthusiastic coordinator.
- ICT is used well in other subjects.
- The very good resources encourage pupils to learn but on occasions the software is too limiting.

### **Commentary**

73. Standards are above those expected for pupils at both key stages. By Year 6 pupils have skills in all areas of the ICT which they use regularly to support their learning in most curriculum areas. Keyboard skills of editing, locating text and transferring images develop systematically and each pupil can access their own folder of work within the networked system. Year 2 pupils are familiar with simple word processing skills and can compose and edit simple sentences. They can highlight text and identify symbols to change size and colour.
74. The good and at times very good teaching reflects strong and secure subject knowledge on the part of the teachers. Lessons are organised well so that maximum use can be made of the school's good hardware resources. Often this will involve the use of one of the school's 'Smart boards' (interactive computer screens) which enable teachers to compensate effectively for the lack of a computer suite and for the difficult 'terrain' of the building. The natural way in which teachers and pupils have come to use ICT is a true reflection of the National Curriculum requirements and means that pupils are growing up viewing the technology much in the same way they do books and other learning aids. Consequently their skills develop naturally and out of a desire to learn. Where teaching is less successful the software is too restrictive and does not provide pupils with the opportunity to extend their knowledge and to learn something new.
75. Pupils show high levels of interest in their lessons. They are attentive throughout, follow the lesson closely and make thoughtful comments at appropriate times. As a result they are confident users of the software and make good learning gains from their experiences. The very good leadership of the subject manager has helped the school to make significant improvement since the last inspection and to address the issue from the last report well.

### **Information and communication technology across the curriculum**

76. A strength of the teaching and learning of ICT is the constructive manner in which pupils are given frequent opportunities to use a range of technology in the different subjects of the curriculum. In science they use sensors to record information about light and temperature in relation to clouds over a period of time. Word processed accounts and explanations aid pupils' learning in subjects such as religious education and help to further their literacy skills. The internet provides pupils with historical and geographical information and aids the development of their research skills.

## **HUMANITIES**

No history lessons were seen and it is not therefore possible to make a firm judgement about provision in this subject. Inspectors analysed the work pupils completed last year, examined the coordinators' files and held discussions with staff and pupils.

Lessons were seen in geography in Years 1 to 5 and in religious education in Year 1 and Year 5 - findings were confirmed by examination of pupils' work and through discussion with staff and pupils.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

Provision in geography is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The subject is taught enthusiastically and the curriculum is innovative.
- Due emphasis is placed on pupils acquiring subject skills as well as knowledge of different places.
- Provision is monitored carefully by the coordinator.
- ICT is used constructively to aid pupils' learning.

### **Commentary**

77. The school has given careful consideration to how the curriculum for subjects such as geography can be made more effective. A system by which part of the National Curriculum requirements for geography are taught regularly while other sections are taught as intensive blocks of lessons was set in motion a short while ago. It is too early to say just how effective this will prove in the long term, but there are very promising signs that it will have benefits for pupils' learning. The pupils themselves enjoy these intensive periods, when they can engross themselves fully in a project and see it through to completion. These periods give teachers the opportunity to teach specific skills with pupils having time to try them out and put them into practice.
78. To some extent teachers are still finding out how to make best use of this way of working and currently the teaching and learning are satisfactory and on occasions good. Teachers deliver the subject with an enthusiasm which transmits to the pupils and the atmosphere in lessons is busy and productive. Pupils' achievements are satisfactory and by Year 6 their attainment is at and in some cases above the level expected. Most pupils develop an appropriate range of key skills, such as how to draw, use and interpret maps, because they are taught these skills progressively all the way through school.
79. Information and communication technology is incorporated well into geography lessons. For example, Year 4 pupils were seen researching information on the Internet and Year 2 pupils used a digital camera, under supervision, to record important features of the locality. The geography coordinator manages the subject effectively and monitors the provision closely. There has been clear progress in the subject since the last inspection and very satisfactory rate of development has been maintained. The school is getting close to the time when a full evaluation of the curriculum innovation needs to take place to ensure that it is as effective as possible.

## **HISTORY**

### **Commentary**

80. By Year 2 and Year 6 standards meet expectations and throughout the school pupils' achievement is satisfactory. These are similar findings to those reported at the time of the last inspection. The strength of pupils' attainment lies in their knowledge of characters and periods from the past. Pupils have some skills, for example they can accurately place events in chronological order, but in general these are not as well developed as their knowledge of

historical facts and it is this that prevents standards being any higher. Their grasp of how historical information is accumulated and how to find out things for themselves is rather tentative. This is not helped by the school's lack of library facilities which places limitations on the opportunities pupils have to learn research skills.

81. The teaching of history in Years 1 to 6 is sound. Teachers think creatively when structuring work for the pupils, which adds breadth to the curriculum and generates pupils' interest in the subject. Older pupils, for example, study modern history and have gained much from looking at the life and times of John Lennon. A homework project to build a model of a room from a Victorian house drew many parents into the learning process and resulted in a display of well made and high quality models which did much for pupils' understanding of the period.
82. Teachers encourage pupils to make effective use of their literacy skills which enhances their history and extends their English. Year 1 pupils, for example, write letters home as a soldier in the Crimea, telling of the help they have received from Florence Nightingale. Due emphasis is placed on the importance of numbers in history and older pupils can accurately date different periods, giving them a firm grasp of the passage of time. Computers linked to the Internet are used as sources of information and pupils are becoming comfortable with the technology as an aid to learning.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision in religious education is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievements are good and attainment is above expectations.
- Good teaching develops pupils' knowledge of and stimulates their thinking about religion.
- Visits and visitors are used well to give pupils a wide range of experiences.
- Pupils demonstrated good attitudes and show a thoughtful interest in the subject.

### Commentary

83. Pupils' attainment is above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Only two lessons were seen and both had positive characteristics which said much about pupils' attitudes and learning. Pupils in Year 1 identified well with the ideas of care and protection in a story about the symbolism in a brother and sister relationship. They had clear opinions about special friends and explained confidently the reasons for their views. In a topic about pilgrimage, Year 5 and 6 pupils made good use of literacy and ICT skills as they wrote accounts of journeys, assuming the role of the pilgrims. Pupils respond well to the interesting things they are given to do. They offer thoughtful questions and opinions that show interest and involvement in their work. The writing of older pupils shows their increasing maturity and sensitivity to the feelings of others.
84. The good teaching is based on a secure knowledge of the subject and a confidence to offer pupils opportunities to consider the deeper meaning of their knowledge. Visits to places of worship and visitors such as a nun from a nearby convent, are used constructively to increase pupils' understanding of key ideas such as the importance of commitment. The school has strong links with the nearby church and the vice chair of governors takes an assembly each week adding a further dimension to the school's well balanced curriculum. The one that took place during the inspection brought a particularly sensitive and perceptive presentation of ideas about the higher, guiding presence in our lives to the pupils.
85. The religious education coordinator manages the subject well and there has been good improvement since the last inspection. The new Agreed Syllabus is being implemented enthusiastically and resources are being developed.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

No lessons were seen in design and technology or art and design and it is not therefore possible to make a firm judgement about provision in these subjects. Evidence is taken primarily from a scrutiny of the curriculum, the subject co-ordinators' management file, pupils' work and discussions with pupils.

Three lessons were seen in music in Years 3 to 6 and two lessons in physical education in Years 4 to 6. Discussions also took place with the subject managers and with pupils.

## ART AND DESIGN

### Commentary

86. Although no lessons were seen during the inspection, work around the school and discussion with pupils indicates that standards are above average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and pupils' achievement is good. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.
87. Pupils are taught a wide range of techniques which they apply well. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 painted watercolours of the River Ouse. They went to observe the river and were shown by the teacher how to incorporate perspective in their work. Pupils also took account of light and shade in order to portray a good distinction between the greens and blues of the grass, river and sky. The completed work is of a high quality.
88. Pupils are taught how to make good use of sketch books so that they plan carefully before starting on a piece of work. They are instructed well in the use of different materials. For example, pupils in Year 1 made woodland animal homes using paper, card and tissue to construct their homes and choosing appropriate colours for camouflage. Pupils are proud of their work and can discuss how they created each piece of work. On occasions, older pupils are unsure of the correct terms to use when describing the procedures they employed.
89. The school regularly has artists in residence to work with different classes. The work they do enriches the curriculum and pupils learn new and interesting techniques. The teaching is good and covers a wide range of work. Pupils are taught about the work of other artists. For example, pupils in the Years 3 and 4 have looked at the work of Klee and Kandinsky and have produced some interesting work in the style of Picasso.
90. The quality of assessment is good. Assessments are carried out using the national scheme and the information used to identify pupils of high ability so that they can be given appropriately challenging work. The subject leader has a good overview of the subject and keeps careful records of pupils' progress.

## DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Provision in design and technology is **sound**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Solid teaching enables pupils to acquire a secure grasp of the design and make process.
- Standards are well up to the levels expected for primary age pupils.
- Pupils take a considerable pride in their achievements.
- Resources for learning are good.
- The subject is led competently by a conscientious coordinator.



## Commentary

91. By Year 6 pupils know the stages they need to go through to turn an initial idea into a complete and well constructed product. They talk enthusiastically about the things they have made and show a willingness to tackle quite difficult projects, such as making motor or cam driven models. Pupils' achievements in Year 6 are built on the solid foundation that is laid further down the school, where, for example, pupils learn to construct slide and pop-up mechanisms in card. Pupils' pride in their achievements is pronounced and the subject does much to enhance their self-esteem.
92. Teachers' assessments and other evidence indicate that at all ages pupils' achievement is satisfactory and that standards meet expectations for the primary age range. Teaching is satisfactory and on occasions good and shows a high level of consistency. A very positive aspect of teaching and learning is the manner in which, from an early age, pupils are engaged in all aspects of designing and making, including making full evaluations of what they have produced. The constructive way in which pupils critically analyse their own efforts reflects positively on their attainment and suggests that a solid platform is being built for a future rise in standards.
93. Teachers assess pupils' work regularly and careful records are kept of the outcomes. These provide useful information to aid teachers' planning and help the coordinator to monitor pupils' progress and evaluate subject provision effectively. Subject management is thorough and a useful file of pupils' work over time has been compiled. The school has purchased a good range of quality equipment which enables the National Curriculum requirements to be met and pupils to learn to use a range of tools and materials. The subject has moved forward since the last inspection and very satisfactory improvements have been made.

## MUSIC

Provision in music is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average and pupils' achievement is good.
- The curriculum for music is good and covers all aspects.
- The specialist teaching promotes good learning.
- Visiting musicians enhance the curriculum.

## Commentary

94. Standards are above average at the end of Year 6 and pupils achieve well. No lessons were seen in the infant classes. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection when standards were average.
95. Pupils are taught to sing with confidence and develop a good sense of rhythm and timing. Effective teaching enabled pupils in Years 5 and 6 to master a slave song with a difficult rhythm and timing which changed in each verse. Pupils' enjoyment is apparent when singing in assemblies where pupils of all ages sing in tune and with confidence. Pupils develop a good knowledge of music and can talk about composers, such as Beethoven, whose music they enjoy. They listen carefully to music and discuss sensibly the content of what they have heard. In Years 4 and 5 pupils tried to identify the animals portrayed in a piece of music taken from 'Carnival of the Animals'. The work was challenging as the teacher asked them to explain their ideas but they tried hard and made thoughtful suggestions.

96. Visiting musicians to the school make a good contribution to the curriculum. Musicians often work with individual classes. There are a large number of peripatetic musicians who visit the school taking individual lessons for example, for steel pans, keyboard and violin. Pupils who performed with their instruments in front of the whole school in assembly showed great confidence and played very well. This reflects well on the teaching they are receiving.
97. The quality of teaching is good. The subject leader takes lessons for pupils in Years 4 to 6. This specialist teaching is having a good effect on standards, as pupils are able to perform well, for example, singing in two-part harmony. Teachers' questioning is good and there is a good rapport between teachers and pupils. For example, when singing the slave song 'Sold down the river' pupils wanted to know why the words were written in a particular way. They asked the teacher for an explanation and it was readily given.
98. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The subject leader is in the process of implementing a new scheme which will aid progression through the school and which will support the one already in place. Assessment of the subject is good and pupils are set challenging targets, which are closely monitored by the subject leader.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

Provision in physical education is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Older pupils are taught well and have good levels of skill.
- Very good attitudes and behaviour by the pupils.
- The subject is managed well.
- The accommodation and location of the school places some restrictions on activities.

### **Commentary**

99. It was not possible to observe any lessons at Key Stage 1 and therefore no judgement about standards and achievement can be made. Older pupils exhibit ball skills that are above the expected level. They kick accurately and dribble with good close control. Pupils' behaviour in lessons is good. They follow rules closely, respect each other's space and co-operate well.
100. Teachers are well trained in the delivery of all aspects of the curriculum and teach the subject with confidence. The teaching observed was planned and organised well. The activities were progressive in the level of skill required and were changed regularly so that pupils' interest was maintained. Pupils' awareness of the effects of exercise on the body was developed in discussion before activities started and good consideration was given to health and safety issues as pupils walked from the school to a nearby park for the lesson. Care was taken to involve all pupils, including those with special educational needs.
101. Enthusiastic subject leadership and effective management have helped to produced good improvement since the last inspection. The school hall is small and outdoor space limited but these restrictions are partly overcome through the use of a community field nearby. Swimming takes place by arrangement with a nearby school and the majority of pupils reach the expected standard. Parents have expressed a wish for more team sport but the school feels, with some justification, that the small year groups prevent pupils from competing at a fair level. It does encourage pupils to join other organisations for competitive sport and runs games clubs, joins in cross-country events and organises a sports day.

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

One very short personal, social and health education lesson was seen and the course coordinator was interviewed. The evidence is therefore very limited and it would be inappropriate to make a judgement about provision.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

There is insufficient evidence to make a detailed analysis of strengths and weaknesses or to add significantly to what has already been written about personal, social and health education under the **Curriculum** section of this report.

### **Commentary**

102. The lesson seen centred on helping wild birds through the winter. The teacher used a constructive approach and gave Year 3 and Year 4 pupils the opportunity to contribute their ideas to initiatives stemming from the school council. Through such activities pupils are learning to make collective decisions and developing a sense of social responsibility.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
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
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>3</b>
Pupils' achievement	3
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>2</b>
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
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	4
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>3</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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