

INSPECTION REPORT

**ST STEPHEN'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND VOLUNTARY
AIDED JUNIOR SCHOOL**

Twickenham

LEA area: Richmond

Unique reference number: 102915

Acting Headteacher: Miss Stephanie Roberts

Lead inspector: Mr Fred Riches

Dates of inspection: 13th October – 15th October 2003

Inspection number: 257958

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	7 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll;	355
School address:	Winchester Road Twickenham
Postcode:	TW1 1LF
Telephone number:	(0208) 892 3462
Fax number:	(0208) 744 9121
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Elaine Parrish
Date of previous inspection:	April 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St Stephen's Church of England Voluntary Aided Junior School takes boys and girls from age seven to 11. All pupils come from Twickenham. There are currently 355 pupils on roll, with a fairly even balance of boys and girls. The socio-economic background of pupils is well above average. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below average. Children's attainment on entry to the school in most years is well above average. The pupil turnover is low. Approximately 90 per cent of pupils are of white United Kingdom or European origin. The remaining ten per cent are mainly from Asian or Asian British backgrounds, with a few of Caribbean origin and a very small number from other ethnic groups. A few pupils speak English as an additional language. Only one, who recently arrived in the school, is at an early stage of English language acquisition. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is below average. Four pupils have a statement of special educational need. The school won the Schools Achievement Award in 2001 and 2002.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
23235	Fred Riches	Lead inspector	Information and communication technology; personal, health and social education and citizenship; French; music; English as an additional language
19798	Jane O'Keefe	Lay inspector	
17343	Sandra Morris	Team inspector	English; art and design; special educational needs
19817	Judith Dowsett	Team inspector	Science; design and technology; physical education
20324	Vera Morris	Team inspector	Mathematics; geography; history

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a very effective school. Standards are very high. Achievement by pupils of all abilities is very good. Very good teaching is well supported by very good leadership and management to ensure that pupils learn very successfully. **The school gives very good value for money.**

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Very high standards in English, mathematics and science, with standards well above national expectations in information and communication technology (ICT) and above in history and physical education (PE); pupils achieve very well overall in these subjects.
- Standards are satisfactory, but not as high as they could be in art and design and in design and technology because time is squeezed, although the school provides enriching experiences through focused theme weeks and residential visits.
- Provision for personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship is excellent and the school provides very good care and guidance for pupils.
- Teaching is good overall and includes a significant proportion of very good teaching.
- Very good, supportive interim leadership by the acting headteacher, well supported by the senior management team and governors, together with very efficient organisational and day-to-day management systems.
- The school provides very well for pupils with special educational needs and those who are gifted and talented.
- A strong partnership with parents, especially through the Parent Teacher Association.
- School development planning lacks clear priorities and a long-term strategy.
- Pupils' access to computers in school is restricted by limited resources, though effective teaching and use of homework ensures that standards are high.

The school has made good improvement since the last inspection. Standards have been consistently high. All aspects of the school's provision show improvement or maintained high quality, except for the school development plan, which lacks clarity of focus and vision. The school has made very good improvement in addressing issues from the previous inspection in 1998. It has improved assessment, tracking and target setting procedures, developed clear systems for reviewing pupils' work in foundation subjects and taken satisfactory steps to improve planning for pupils' spiritual development.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

Key: A - very high; A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average.*

Pupils achieve very well at St Stephen's. They achieve very well in English, mathematics, science, ICT, music and French. Standards in the current Year 6 are very high in the core subjects. They are also above national expectations in history, PE and most aspects of music. This is due to the high quality of teaching and well organised setting arrangements in English and mathematics. Standards in art and in design and technology are mainly average, as is pupils' achievement. Insufficient time is devoted to them. It was not possible to judge standards in geography. The table shows that Year 6 standards have been consistently high in recent years. A* denotes a level of

performance among the top five per cent of schools nationally. Results for 2003 show that pupils achieved well above their peers in similar schools in all three subjects.

Pupils show very positive personal qualities as a result of the school's excellent provision for PSHE. This underpins very good moral and social development overall. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. For their cultural development, it is satisfactory.

Pupils are articulate in putting their viewpoint and listen to each other very well, respecting each other's views. They readily accept responsibility. Many show initiative and develop effective independent study skills as a result of the school's well-considered homework policy. School council members show an exemplary mature approach to their role. Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and relationships are very good, as a result of the school's consistent procedures and the positive role models of staff. Attendance is satisfactory but no better, as a result of the high proportion of pupils taking holidays during term time.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is very good. Provision for the core subjects of English, mathematics and science and for PSHE, ICT and history is particularly well planned. **The quality of teaching and learning is good.** Several lessons are of very high quality. Day-to-day assessment and marking is good. Assessment information is used effectively to set expectations for year groups and individuals and to report to parents on their progress. The school offers a stimulating curriculum, greatly enriched focused theme weeks, day and residential visits. However, time for some subjects is limited, with the result that standards are not as high as they could be in these. The ICT curriculum is planned very well, but access to computers is restricted, with one suite and one class computer each for 12 classes. The school provides very good care, support and guidance for all pupils. Its partnership with parents is very good. These factors contribute significantly to pupils' positive attitudes to school and to their high achievement.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good. The acting headteacher and senior management team have given considerable support to new staff. All staff share high aspirations for pupils. The acting headteacher has maintained high staff morale during the period between headteachers. Highly efficient management and organisational systems, together with excellent day-to-day administration, enable teachers to focus on teaching. Subject co-ordination roles are in a state of flux, with several staff new to their roles. The school has identified the need to develop these and for co-ordinators to liaise more closely with governors. The development plan lists action to be taken in a range of aspects of the school's work, but does not clarify priorities or set measurable outcomes to create a vision and focus for the school. Governors are supportive. Several are experienced and give effective support with finance, personnel and premises. Several are comparatively new and eager to be effective. The chair knows the school well and gives particularly effective support. The governing body has not yet fully developed its role of monitoring the curriculum.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents and pupils express very positive views about all aspects of the school's provision. The inspection agrees wholeheartedly with these. A small proportion of parents feel too many additional activities are selective. Transitional arrangements this term, following an unusually high staff turnover, mean that fewer clubs are running than usual. The inspection finds provision for additional activities is good, particularly in light of the large number of pupils participating and the limited number of staff.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Give more time to subjects where standards are satisfactory but could be higher.
- Inject clear priorities and a long-term vision into school development planning.
- Improve pupils' access to computers in school.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in subjects

Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds achieve very well overall during their four years at the school. Standards reached by the oldest pupils in the core subjects are exceptionally high. They are well above average in information and communication technology (ICT) and good in history and physical education (PE). Pupils' achievement in personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship, by the end of Year 6, is outstanding. Standards are satisfactory, but not as high as they could be, in art and design, geography and design and technology. The inspection found insufficient evidence to make judgements on standards at age 11 in geography and music, but pupils achieved very well in music lessons seen.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very high standards in English, mathematics and science.
- Outstanding achievement in PSHE and citizenship.
- Standards well above national expectations in ICT.
- Standards above national expectations in history and PE.
- Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds, including the gifted and talented and those with special educational needs, achieve well or very well in the above subjects, music and French.
- While pupils reach satisfactory standards in art and design and technology, they could do better.
- Pupils achieve very well in most aspects of music, but singing in assemblies is weak.

Commentary

1. Standards at age 11 have been very high in recent years. Standards in mathematics have been consistently in the top five per cent of schools nationally. In English, standards were among the top five per cent nationally in three of the past four years and, in science, in two of the past four. In 2003, the school's performance in English and mathematics was in the top five per cent of all schools and well above that of similar schools (those whose pupils scored similarly at age seven in 1999). In science, pupils' performance was well above average nationally and in comparison with similar schools. This shows very good achievement for all pupils through their four years at St Stephen's.
2. Inspection findings show continued very good achievement overall throughout the school in English and mathematics. Current Year 6 standards in these subjects are again very high. Pupils' achievement in PSHE and in speaking and listening is excellent. This stems from a very well planned programme of study, which underpins the school's ethos and contributes very effectively to pupils' very positive attitudes and the high standards achieved. Year 6 pupils speak intelligently and enthusiastically about the work they have done in all subjects.
3. Achievement in science, history, ICT, PE and music is good in the current year throughout the school, reflecting good teaching and a well-planned curriculum. Although time in the ICT suite is tight and classroom computers are underused, teachers encourage pupils to make use of home computers and many pupils do this very effectively. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory in work seen in art and design and design and technology, although some examples of work showing higher standards were seen in these subjects. Pupils do not achieve as well as they could because these subjects receive too little curriculum time and improvement planning has not focused on raising standards. Pupils achieve well and often very well, in music lessons, involving composition and ostinato rhythms for example. Pupils' singing is good in class, but does not reach the standard it should in assemblies.

4. Standards in English and mathematics in Year 3 are lower than in any year group admitted to the school for some time. Pupils at risk of underachievement are achieving very well in small literacy and numeracy groups, which have been established rapidly and efficiently by the school management to address the identified challenges. Overall, pupils with special educational needs make very good progress. The majority attain average standards by the end of Year 6. Gifted and talented pupils also achieve very well because they are recognised and challenged.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003/2004

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	30.4 (29.5)	27.0 (27.0)
mathematics	30.2 (30.2)	26.7 (26.6)
science	31.0 (30.3)	28.3 (28.3)

There were 86 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

5. The table shows the school's pupils performing among the top five per cent of schools nationally in English and mathematics, and well above their peers in similar schools in all three subjects. The school has not only maintained, but improved on the well above average standards reported at the last inspection.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and relationships are very good. Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall. Pupils show how their personal qualities have been developed exceptionally well through PSHE lessons. Attendance is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision for personal development is very good overall, including excellent arrangements for regular PSHE lessons.
- The school provides very good opportunities for pupils to take responsibility.
- Pupils' behaviour and their attitudes towards school are very good.
- Pupils' confidence and self-esteem are high.
- The rate of authorised absence is above average because of term-time holidays.

Commentary

6. Pupils speak very positively about their school. They have high levels of confidence and self-esteem. Their behaviour is very good both in lessons and outside in the playground. They are polite to adults and each other. The school deals very effectively with isolated incidents of bullying. 'Playground buddies' from Year 6 quickly sort out any misunderstandings or minor incidents between pupils. The playground is well equipped with a very good range of activities to occupy the pupils during their playtime and this ensures that there are few incidents of inappropriate behaviour.
7. The school has a consistent approach to fostering good behaviour. Pupils are expected and helped to reflect upon the consequences of their actions for themselves and others. There have been no exclusions from the school in the last academic year. Parents are very pleased with the behaviour of pupils and feel the school does a lot to help their children develop mature attitudes.
8. Pupils have many opportunities to take responsibility and make an important contribution to the management of the school. Pupils run the school council exceptionally well. All classes are represented. They made an excellent contribution to the appointment of their new

headteacher. Issues of concern for pupils are raised and discussed with sensitivity. Sensible resolutions are sought and consensus achieved.

9. The school offers an excellent range of educational visits, which make an important contribution to pupils' social development. The school makes excellent use of circle time in PSHE lessons to develop sensitivity to others and to develop self-awareness. As a result, pupils have a highly developed sense of right and wrong and gain a mature understanding of different cultures and beliefs. There is good provision for the development of spiritual and cultural awareness through literature, art and design, music, religious education, history and geography, but less through mathematics, science and technology.
10. Attendance at the school is monitored effectively and there is little unauthorised absence. However, several parents take holidays in term time, which results in the authorised absence rate being above average.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	5.0
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.0
National data	0.5

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British – Indian
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Chinese
Any other ethnic group
No ethnic group recorded

No of pupils on roll
274
2
28
4
6
4
5
2
2
1
1
2
18

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

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a very effective education for its pupils. Provision for PSHE is outstanding and there is very good emphasis on all aspects of English and mathematics, stimulating enthusiasm and high standards. The school offers a rich, relevant and broad curriculum, although it is not sufficiently well balanced. Some subjects suffer from a lack of time. Teaching and learning are good overall, with a significant proportion of even higher quality. Staff provide very good care, support and

guidance for all pupils and the school's partnership with parents is very good. These factors contribute positively to pupils' attitudes and achievement.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. It was very good in over a third of lessons observed. The quality of assessment of pupils' work is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good overall, with a significant proportion of very good and, occasionally, excellent teaching.
- Results of rigorous assessment procedures are being analysed very effectively to set end-of-year targets and to organise sets for mathematics and some English lessons.
- Teachers use homework very effectively and are very well supported by parents in this.
- The teaching of pupils with special educational needs and those who are gifted and talented is very good.
- The deployment of additional teaching and support staff is good in some lessons but inefficient in others.

Commentary

11. The quality of teaching throughout the school is good. Year group leaders provide effective role models. This is particularly valuable in the current context, where six teachers are new to the school this term, including four who are newly qualified.
12. Teaching is good and often very good in English, both in class literacy lessons and in the writing and reading workshops organised for different ability groups. Teaching in mathematics is also good overall, with a high proportion of very good teaching. Teachers make effective use of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy. They adapt them well to match pupils' needs, extending higher attainers in Year 6 by giving them challenging work appropriate to Year 7 pupils for example. All teachers ensure pupils know the lesson aims and in the best lessons they involve pupils in reviewing what they have learnt at the end. All literacy and numeracy lessons run at a brisk pace and are very well planned and organised. Pupils know what teachers expect of them. They settle quickly and work hard.
13. Although the percentage of pupils with special educational needs is well below average there has been a significant rise in the current Year 3. The school has established very good systems and has employed additional staff to manage this change. Pupils benefit from very good teaching in small groups for mathematics and literacy. All pupils with special educational needs have a clear and detailed individual plan to support their learning. The special needs co-ordinator works closely with teachers and classroom assistants to ensure that their needs are understood and activities are appropriate. Additional literacy strategies are used effectively in some year groups. These have made a positive impact on pupils' development of basic skills. Teachers of the small groups use very good strategies for encouraging concentration and good behaviour. Pupils receive a high level of individual support, which enables them to focus on tasks set and to make very good progress. Pupils are rarely withdrawn from class to work individually. When this occurs, it is to work on special programmes, which are specific to individual pupils. Such lessons are effective in improving behaviour and developing basic skills such as spelling. They also provide good opportunity for pastoral care. When working in larger classes, pupils are supported in a variety of ways. Laptop computers are sometimes used to good effect for pupils who have difficulties in recording their work. In the majority of lessons seen, classroom assistants made a valuable contribution to progress made by providing sensitive additional support. However, in a few lessons additional support teachers and assistants were under-deployed and did not focus sufficiently on specific programmes for the pupils with whom they were working. This was a feature in the two unsatisfactory lessons seen during the inspection.

14. Common strengths in teaching in all subjects include conscientious and effective preparation and planning, a good pace to lessons, good relationships with pupils and well-focused questioning. Teachers ensure equality of opportunity for boys and girls from the range of ethnic backgrounds in their classes. As well as meeting the special educational needs of pupils, teachers challenge higher attainers, including those with recognised gifts and talents, very successfully in most subjects. Just occasionally, worksheets limit the quality of work achieved by higher attainers. Where teaching was outstanding, the teacher's imaginative presentation enabled all pupils to contribute strongly to the quality of learning through their own articulate speaking and thoughtful, responsive listening. The teacher's enthusiasm came across and the pupils caught it. They rose to the high expectations, focusing fully throughout the lessons. Examples of outstanding practice are cited at the close of the report sections on English and PSHE.
15. Teachers make very effective use of homework, setting it regularly in accordance with the school's agreed practices and ensuring that pupils note any marking comments. Parents support the school well in this. The survey of parents showed that 94 per cent feel teaching is good and 98 per cent feel that staff expect their children to work hard. The inspection confirms these views. Marking is effective in English and mathematics, but less consistent in other recorded subjects. Overall, teaching in English and mathematics is stronger than in the rest of the curriculum because of the highly structured timetable and planning used by all year groups. In subjects where too little time is allocated, teaching is more a mixture of satisfactory and good rather than good and very good. This is mainly because planning in these subjects often takes insufficient account of pupils' different abilities. There is no significant difference in the quality of teaching between different subjects.
16. The school has rigorous assessment procedures in place for English and mathematics. It has made very good improvement since the last inspection in its procedures for assessing and reporting pupils' progress in other subjects. The linked assessment and reporting statements are a highly efficient and well-focused means of tracking achievement and informing parents. The acting headteacher leads the analysis of optional and statutory testing, ensuring that year leaders and the two subject co-ordinators make valuable use of the information. The achievement of all ethnic groups is carefully analysed, as is the achievement of boys and girls. The only significant gender difference is in the current Year 3, as the school's findings show. The teaching response to this has been swift and effective. Teachers in each year group work effectively together to organise sets and workshop groups and to agree end-of-year targets for each pupil and year group.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 58 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
2 (3%)	20 (34%)	18 (31%)	16 (28%)	2 (3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

The curriculum

The school's curriculum is good. It provides a broad range of relevant and interesting curricular opportunities that enables the majority of pupils to achieve well in most subjects. The time allocation for some foundation subjects is too limited. The good range of extra-curricular opportunities enhances the curriculum. The quality and quantity of accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision for PSHE is excellent.

- Provision for pupils with special educational needs and for gifted and talented pupils is very good.
- There is insufficient time devoted to art and design and technology, which limits achievement for all and challenge for more able pupils in these subjects.
- Resources for ICT are insufficient and some are underused.
- Provision of enrichment activities such as clubs, residential visits and focus weeks is very good.
- The number of teaching assistants is limited; support teachers and assistants are not consistently deployed effectively.
- Pupils are settled very well from infant school and prepared very well for secondary school.
- Many areas of the school are in need of redecoration and refurbishment.

Commentary

17. The school provides an interesting and relevant curriculum based on the National Curriculum, RE and PSHE, with the addition of French in Years 5 and 6. However, time allocations are in need of review. The time for design and technology, art and design and geography is insufficient. In particular the current time allocations restrict pupils' development of practical skills and visual creative arts. Time for assemblies and aspects of English is over-generous.
18. The various levels of curriculum planning support pupils' skills and knowledge development year on year through the school, providing good continuity. Expectations for higher attaining pupils of all ages are identified clearly in English, mathematics and science and through grouping arrangements within lessons in several other subjects. In some subjects, such as art and design and technology, the different expectations for different ability groups are not so clear, potentially limiting the progress of higher attainers because of a lack of defined expectation.
19. The very well organised PSHE programme provides regular and excellent opportunities for all pupils of all abilities and backgrounds to develop personally. This includes very well organised statutory provision for sex and relationships education and drugs awareness. Pupils are very well prepared in terms of literacy and numeracy skills for secondary school. The programme of regular homework is well established, well supported by parents and efficiently organised by staff. It makes a very positive contribution to pupils' learning.
20. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The creation of small sets for pupils needing support in literacy and numeracy is particularly effective. Pupils' education plans include measurable targets, which are reviewed regularly together with pupils and parents. Pupils experience the full range of the curriculum. When working in small groups, their work is closely linked to that of the year group. The school also has well-organised procedures for identifying gifted and talented pupils, so that their abilities are recognised by all staff. As a result, these pupils are challenged well. The school ensures equality of access to the full curriculum for pupils of all ethnic backgrounds and has made particularly helpful provision for a pupil at an early stage of learning English as an additional language.
21. The school organises a range of interesting and motivating visits and events, such as the excellent science and arts weeks during the past year, which provide very good enrichment. The residential visits in Years 4 and 6 contribute very positively to pupils' personal development, as well as enhancing their curriculum. Usually, the school offers a good range of extra-curricular clubs, including music and sport, some of which are open to all pupils at no cost. At the time of the inspection, clubs were temporarily suspended, due to the recent large turnover of staff and interim management arrangements.
22. The school has successfully recruited several new teachers. There are sufficient teachers with a good range of experience to teach the full curriculum and a good balance of newly qualified and experienced staff. The school employs support teachers effectively to enable setting arrangements in English and mathematics, to provide release time for newly qualified

teachers and to give individual and small group teaching to pupils with special educational needs. In addition, support teachers are deployed to assist in classes, but neither they, nor teaching assistants are consistently deployed effectively to raise standards. The number of teaching assistants is very limited. In many lessons, teachers do not need additional support, but in some situations, particularly in Year 3, pupils could achieve better if additional adult support was better deployed.

23. The accommodation has restrictions in terms of size and potential, but the school has made recent beneficial additions, such as new toilets, a more spacious ICT room and a refurbished library. However, many areas of the school require redecoration and new carpets. Pupil furniture is generally old and in need of replacement. The resources for ICT are unsatisfactory because the timetable gives limited access to the suite for each of the 12 classes and classroom computers are underused. Gymnastics resources offer limited challenge to more able pupils. Ageing hall apparatus is underused. The school is aware that access for disabled pupils and adults is an area for development. There is a need to review the use of space in the hall area, but in general the school makes best use of the space available.

Care, guidance and support

Pupil's health, safety and welfare are well provided for. They receive very good personal and academic support from staff. Through the school council there is excellent involvement of the pupils in the work of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff get to know pupils well, ensuring their general well-being.
- The school provides very good personal support.
- Excellent systems for involving pupils in decisions about the school.
- Very good arrangements for induction into the school.
- Good welfare and health and safety procedures.

Commentary

24. The school takes good care of its pupils. Thorough procedures are in place for ensuring health and safety and pupils know who to see if feeling hurt, worried or unwell. Appropriate arrangements are made for dealing with child protection concerns. However staff have not received recent training in this area. Through the very good relationships between staff and pupils at the school, very good personal and academic support is available to pupils. Pupils' views are highly valued. The excellent school council gives these very mature and articulate pupils a chance to express their opinions and have a real say in the life of the school. At the recent interviews for the new headteacher, the school council played a very active role, asking very searching questions of each candidate. Very good arrangements are made for pupils on entry to the school. As a result they settle quickly and happily into the routines. The school's exit questionnaires, completed by Year 6 pupils and their parents last summer, express very positive views on the school's care & guidance. Discussions with pupils in all year groups and observations at break and lunchtimes bear this out.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has worked hard to build the very good links with its parents, which contribute very well to pupils' success. There are good links with the local church, community and other schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are very happy with the work of the school.

- Very strong support for the school from the parent governors and the Parent Teacher Association (PTA).
- The school has greatly improved communication with parents.
- Parents and the community contribute well to pupils' education.
- Annual reports and termly consultations are not consistently used to share targets for improvement.

Commentary

25. Parents support the school very well. They value highly the education and care their children receive. Parent governors are enthusiastic, knowledgeable and committed, ensuring strong links between school and home. The PTA is well organised and very active, arranging many regular annual events. As a result, considerable amounts of money are raised each year to provide extra resources for the school, helping improve provision and raise standards.
26. In the last few months, the acting headteacher and the recently established home-school liaison group have striven hard and very successfully, to improve communication with parents. Very informative weekly newsletters are sent home each week and displayed on the school's website. The school brochure and governors' annual report to parents are detailed and meet all statutory requirements. All parents now have an opportunity to speak to their children's new teachers at the beginning of the autumn term, with termly consultation meetings provided. Reports are issued in the summer term. These report clearly on pupils' progress across all subjects. While teachers report very effectively on what pupils have achieved, the school does not routinely ask teachers to focus their reporting on what pupils need to do next in order to improve. The school makes very good provision for homework. Parents are very supportive of this and current homework arrangements make a very positive contribution to pupils' learning.
27. Good links exist with the local church. The vicar and youth worker visit the school regularly for assemblies and the premises are used by local youth groups. The school takes part in local community events and teachers make good use of the local area for educational visits. Links with local infant and secondary schools are also good. Pupils participate in several joint activities with the infant school. Links between Year 3 and Year 2 teachers are effective. Those between subject co-ordinators are less well developed, partly as a result of recent staffing turnover. Year 6 pupils visit the secondary schools to which they will transfer, to see productions, complete projects and meet staff during transfer arrangements.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

This aspect of the school's provision is very good overall. Leadership is very good. Management is very good. Both are supported by good governance.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good interim leadership and management by the acting headteacher.
- Very good leadership and management by year group leaders.
- A very positive school ethos, underpinned by the school's focus on personal and social education and high achievement.
- The school development plan lacks clear priorities, measurable outcomes related to pupils' achievement and a long-term strategy.
- Very efficient organisational procedures and day-to-day administration.
- A proactive and supportive governing body, though clearer procedures are required for monitoring the curriculum and standards.
- Amid staffing changes, several subject co-ordination and support roles need clarification and development.

Commentary

28. The acting headteacher and senior management team have given considerable support to the seven new teaching staff, including four newly qualified teachers, appointed in September. Each year group leader is an effective member of the senior management team, with distinct roles in addition to year group leadership and mentoring. They fulfil these roles extremely efficiently. As a result, morale has been maintained through the unusually high staff turnover and period between headteachers. All staff work as a team, sharing high aspirations for all pupils. The twin emphasis on academic standards and reflective personal and social education underpin the success of the school, giving it a very positive ethos.
29. Highly efficient organisation of classes and sets, through thorough analysis of infant school records and annual assessments ensures focused teaching for pupils of all abilities in English and mathematics. This includes especially well-organised support for pupils with special educational needs and a good level of challenge for higher attainers. The management of special needs is very good. The special needs co-ordinator has established very good relationships with external agencies, which provide good advice. Regular meetings ensure that pupils' needs are identified and monitored. Parents are offered regular opportunities to discuss progress. All statutory requirements for pupils with statements are met.
30. The acting headteacher's unflappable manner and readiness to listen has sustained a supportive atmosphere for staff and pupils. Her increased focus on communication with parents has found a positive response from both parents and governors. The thorough analysis of last year's optional tests in English and mathematics provides further evidence of well-focused and appropriately short-term leadership and management. This is backed by excellent day-to-day administration by office staff. Performance management procedures are in place for teachers, but not for all educational and administrative support staff. The current situation needs review in any case because of staffing changes.
31. Several subject co-ordinators are new to their roles. The school is aware of the need to develop these. While literacy and numeracy co-ordinators have, in the past, liaised closely with governors, the school has not yet developed links between subject leadership by staff and the governors' need for access to information that helps them monitor curriculum provision and standards. The school development plan lists comprehensive action to be taken in all subjects and several aspects of the school's work. Many of these are annual maintenance tasks, necessary to efficient management, but not focused on improvement. The plan lacks definition of a few main priorities for the whole school to agree as a focus for improvement. It sets measurable outcomes for staff tasks, but does not relate these to outcomes that show the impact on pupils' achievement. All action planned is for the current academic year. While this may be temporarily acceptable in the interim situation, with a change of headteacher, the omission of longer term strategic planning would suggest a lack of vision and overview. A strength of the current plan is the comprehensive nature of action to be taken during the current year under each subject heading. Because the overall strategic picture is not reviewed, however, the current imbalance of time allocations for subjects is not addressed.
32. Governors are supportive and proactive. The governing body ensures that all statutory requirements are met. Several experienced governors give effective support, for example with finance, personnel and premises. Others are comparatively new, but have already found ways of being effective, on the home-school liaison group for instance. The chair has worked effectively with the previous headteacher and the acting head. She knows the school well and has a clear overview of the governing body's current strengths and areas requiring improvement. The main area in which the governing body has not yet fully developed its role, is in the monitoring of curriculum, including all subjects and standards.
33. The chair of finance and previous headteacher worked closely on budget planning and involved subject co-ordinators effectively in a bidding process. The current development plan shows some financial allocations, but strategic budget planning and ways of checking whether the school is getting best value are areas for development. For example, the school was ahead of

the field in provision for ICT a few years ago, but now provides insufficient access for pupils. Also, examples of both efficient and inefficient deployment of teaching and support staff are aspects needing management attention.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	907,084
Total expenditure	919,109
Expenditure per pupil	2,567

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	25,912
Balance carried forward to the next	24,517

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 2

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

English

The provision for English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards of speaking, listening, reading and writing are very high and pupils achieve very well.
- Pupils with special educational needs and those who are gifted and talented make very good progress in reading and writing.
- Teaching is good overall with examples of very good and excellent lessons.
- In some subjects, such as science, a small minority of pupils do not consistently record their work to a high enough standard.
- There are inconsistencies between year groups in the time allocated to literacy.

Commentary

34. Standards in English are exceptionally high when compared to other schools nationally and well above those of similar schools. They have been maintained very well since the last inspection. In recent years standards on entry to the school have been consistently well above average in reading and writing. Pupils have achieved very well during their time in the junior school, resulting in the very high standards reached by Year 6. However, the standards of the current Year 3 pupils are lower than usual. About 25 per cent of pupils on entry are working at a below average standard in writing and the majority of these pupils are boys. The school has responded well to this situation and pupils are benefiting from teaching in small groups. As a result of very good support, pupils with special educational needs make very good progress, the majority attaining average standards in reading and writing by Year 6.
35. Standards in speaking and listening are very high, particularly among the oldest pupils. They are extremely articulate and express themselves in a lively and imaginative way in discussions and in writing. They are avid readers and have read a wide range of challenging literature. Year 6 pupils have read many classic novels both modern and traditional. They also read biographies and autobiographies according to their interests. Some selectively read newspaper articles. They give considered opinions on their reading and discuss the plot and characters in detail. Pupils evaluate their own writing and write for a range of different purposes. The standards of writing attained in literacy lessons are well above average and there are examples of excellent writing. Gifted and talented pupils are challenged well and respond to the school's high expectations.
36. Teaching is good overall. Three quarters of the lessons observed were good or better. All teachers plan lessons well, ensuring that all aspects of the subject are covered. Teachers have very good relationships with pupils, who, as a result, enjoy their lessons and apply themselves well to their tasks. Teachers' subject knowledge is good and they tell the pupils what the objectives of the lessons are. Work is carefully marked and this provides good feedback for pupils on their progress. In very good lessons, pupils are challenged by the tasks set and teachers have high expectations, which are clearly explained. In the best writing lessons, teachers model the process very well and provide checklists for pupils to evaluate their own work. Very good links are made between speaking and writing through role-play, discussion and evaluation.

37. The new co-ordinator has a good understanding of what needs to be done to improve further. The progress of all pupils and the quality of teaching are carefully monitored. The management of the subject is good. The school plans a thoughtful series of measures over the current year to improve provision. However, criteria for measuring the impact of these on standards is not linked through development planning to the target setting procedures already in place. A number of appropriate review activities have been undertaken, which include work scrutiny and lesson observations. The school is aware of inconsistencies between year groups in the amount of time allocated for aspects of English. Some pupils are spending too much time on handwriting and silent reading.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

38. Pupils apply their speaking and listening skills extremely well in the context of certain other subjects, especially in PSHE and citizenship lessons. Pupils apply their reading, comprehension and research skills increasingly well as they progress through the school, particularly in homework tasks. Older pupils make highly effective use of their ICT skills to present their findings. Their use of writing skills, in terms of content, accuracy of spelling and punctuation, and presentation in history is impressive. Not all the more able pupils consistently record their work in other subjects to the standards seen in literacy lessons, however. This is particularly apparent in science and design and technology, where the use of worksheets sometimes restricts the ability of able pupils to organise their own response to subjects studied. The school does not yet have a curriculum overview to show the structured application of literacy skills in other subjects to help ensure balance and breadth of opportunity. However, planned links within a number of subjects show very good and occasionally excellent opportunities for pupils to develop and apply their reading and writing skills. The following example illuminates this:

Example of outstanding practice:

Excellent use of role-play linked to history studies to promote writing of very high quality.

In an excellent Year 6 writing lesson for higher attainers, an exceptional standard of writing was achieved. A fast paced introduction effectively built on homework from the previous day, ensuring all pupils were well prepared for the lesson. The use of hot-seating role-play, to interview the mother of an evacuee during the war, was very effective. The teacher encouraged the class to assess the child's feelings and character by asking questions of her 'mother', asking how her feelings and character would be portrayed in her actions and appearance. Pupils were challenged to think of metaphors for her situation. Talented writers had been identified and were given a checklist to enable them to assess the impact of their writing on the reader. An example of an opening sentence to a paragraph was " Claudia stood by the pavement, her bag sagged down to her waist, biting into her shoulder". The teacher asked what impact had been intended by using the word "biting". The response was " I wanted to show the pain and suffering of Claudia". Another child added, " It is her emotions described by the bag hurting". Other examples of the quality of writing include "She jumped sideways on the pavement, clutching her teddy bear in a vice-like grip" and " Louise plodded along the path towards the station, her overlarge

French

Provision in French is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good teaching.
- Well-organised curriculum focused on conversation.
- Stimulating additional activities.

Commentary

39. The subject was only lightly sampled in this inspection. In the lesson observed, teaching was very good. The teacher used a range of effective strategies to involve pupils successfully in paired conversations, singing and role play involving famous French people. Year 5 pupils, after just six lessons, showed very good ability to hold an initial conversational greeting with a partner, exchanging names, ages and information about how they are feeling. As a result of the teacher's brisk pace, fluent conversation, almost entirely in French and high expectations, every pupil in the class showed enthusiasm and pronounced phrases well.
40. The school organises an effective introduction to a modern foreign language as an integral part of the local education authority's programme to teach a language to all pupils from Year 5 upwards. The co-ordinator organises additional events to enrich pupils' lesson experiences, such as a visit to the Europa Centre for a French day. The weekly lesson provides a positive contribution to the school's broad curriculum, widening pupils' horizons and offering a positive start to their knowledge of foreign languages.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well and reach very high standards.
- Teaching is good and often very good, challenging and stretching pupils.
- The organisation of sets is beneficial to pupils of all abilities.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes and work very hard.
- The school does not routinely share targets with pupils to help them improve.
- Opportunities for mathematical investigations and applying mathematics in other subjects are limited.

Commentary

41. Standards in the 2002 National Curriculum tests at age 11 were well above average and in the top five per cent nationally. The school's performance was well above that of similar schools. The test results for 2003 show these high standards being sustained. Standards in the current Year 6 are again very high. Boys and girls perform equally well. Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds, including those with special educational needs, achieve very well during their time at the school. The school has maintained and improved on the high standards reported at the last inspection.
42. Achievement by Year 6 pupils in numeracy is of a very high standard. Higher attaining pupils have outstanding knowledge, understanding and skills in the subject, well exemplified in their work on fraction equivalence, in decimals, ratios, proportions and in their capacity to work out their own strategies for solving complex problems.
43. The school's setting arrangements, creating four sets from three classes, benefit all pupils, but particularly those who find mathematics difficult, including those with special educational needs. These pupils receive effective teaching and support in small groups, while higher ability sets are managed effectively with much larger numbers of pupils. This arrangement is particularly beneficial in the current Year 3, which contains a higher proportion of pupils of lower ability overall than usual. Work planned for all abilities is demanding and all groups and individuals achieve well. Many achieve very well. Almost all pupils achieve very well in relation to their capabilities in each year group. They enjoy mathematics, concentrate fully and work hard for the daily hour-long lessons. This is because teachers plan and focus sequences of lessons well, matching tasks to each set's abilities and sharing objectives clearly at the start of

each lesson. The school shares individual targets with pupils who have special educational needs and their parents. However, it does not routinely make use of this effective strategy, either with groups or individuals, to help pupils of all abilities know for themselves how to improve their knowledge, skills and understanding.

44. Teaching is stimulating, interesting and challenging. The quality of teaching is nearly always good and frequently very good. As a result, pupils learn very well and make good progress as they move through the school. Lessons are very carefully planned, with well-graduated problems of increasing difficulty, which pupils find interesting and challenging. Teaching is especially characterised by very good questioning, which promotes learning and understanding. Expectations are very high. Teachers provide pupils with a wide range of learning opportunities, which strengthen and extend their thinking. In this way, pupils gain confidence and make progress. However, on a few occasions teachers' desire to set a quick pace means that some pupils are given insufficient time to have their difficulties resolved and to secure their understanding. This can lead to frustration, because they are equally as keen to progress as their classmates. Classrooms provide a supportive learning environment and relationships between teachers and pupils are good.
45. The management of the subject by the newly appointed co-ordinator is good and based on thorough understanding of the subject and the curriculum. Assessment is used well to inform the very good lesson planning within years. Resources in the subject are good. The inspection found little evidence of mathematical investigations being used to develop pupils' fascination with the subject and ability to explain their various calculations and strategies. Overall, however, the school's use of the National Numeracy Strategy ensures good coverage of all aspects of mathematics, including very successful development of mental and oral skills.

Mathematics across the curriculum

46. Pupils use their mathematical skills, knowledge and understanding very successfully in science, but the inspection found little evidence of its planned application in other subjects. Specific mathematics lessons in the ICT suite link these two subjects. Older pupils make good use of ICT to develop data handling skills, create sequences of directions and use formulae on spreadsheets for example. Overall, however, the structured application of mathematics in other subjects is an area for further development.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in science are very high.
- Pupils of all abilities achieve very well.
- Teaching of science is good overall and often very good.
- Events such as Science Week add sparkle to the curriculum.
- Planning for pupils of different abilities is sometimes inhibited by the use of worksheets.

Commentary

- 47 In 2003, approximately two thirds of Year 6 pupils reached standards beyond those expected for their age in national tests. There has been a marked increase in the number of pupils attaining the higher levels in the last two years. The school's performance shows good improvement on the already well above average standards reported at the last inspection. Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds, including those with special educational needs, achieve very well, as shown by the 99 per cent of Year 6 pupils who reached the standard for their age in 2003. In most lessons observed, pupils made good or very good progress. The continued

focus on staff training and raising the profile of science as a practical subject, has had a positive impact on standards and progress.

- 48 Pupils' work in books, on displays and in classes shows overall good teaching and learning, with much that is very good. Recent work is very well presented and pupils are beginning to write independently. Pupils express themselves confidently, apply their knowledge and give scientific explanations for observations and natural phenomena. Pupils make satisfactory use of data-handling skills, tables, graphs and diagrams, applying their mathematical knowledge and skills in relevant contexts. Pupils of all ages make good use of ICT to enter information and create charts, but this is underdeveloped because of time constraints.
- 49 An example of very good teaching and learning was a Year 6 lesson, in which pupils engaged in a lively discussion about the water cycle, while learning about evaporation and condensation. The teacher showed enthusiasm and good knowledge of the concept. A brisk pace was maintained and the teacher had high expectations of work to be completed and behaviour. Pupils worked independently, completing detailed annotated drawings of a high standard, with the more able making references to what would happen to the water cycle in very hot countries. The thorough planning, very good questioning, clear instructions and very good support for pupils with special educational needs, all contributed to an effective lesson.
- 50 The school recognises the need to further develop literacy, numeracy and ICT skills through the science curriculum. However, planning across the school indicates that higher attaining pupils are not consistently challenged in lessons and that practical and written work is not matched sufficiently to pupils' differing abilities. This is instanced particularly when worksheets are overused, making insufficient demand on higher attainers. Where marking is good, supportive comments inform pupils what they have achieved and what they need to do to improve. This pattern is not wholly consistent throughout the school.
- 51 There has been a smooth handover to the new science co-ordinator. Previous monitoring and action taken has been effective in raising standards. However, the science development plan refers to co-ordinator tasks and does not set measurable targets related to pupils' standards and achievement. The curriculum is greatly enriched by a series of valuable events and visits, such as the exciting Science Week and trips to Kew Gardens and Kingswood, where enthusiastic pupils become engrossed in investigations.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **good** overall, but resourcing is unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Insufficient access for pupils to computers in school.
- Standards are high and pupils achieve very well despite the unsatisfactory resources.
- Very good subject co-ordination.
- Well-organised use of the ICT suite, with good teaching of the subject overall.
- Classroom computers are underused.
- Very good use of home computers, positively encouraged by the school.

Commentary

52. The subject co-ordinator has planned a very effective curriculum for each year group, covering all strands of the curriculum, within the constraints of current resource provision. The time allocated to each class covers one 45-minute lesson in ICT skills and one flexible lesson allocated to year groups for work linked usually to literacy or numeracy. During the inspection, the single computers in classrooms were rarely used, as they did not fit in with the teaching style required for the lessons. One computer suite, accessed by pairs of pupils in this weekly pattern, does not give pupils sufficient access to computers to develop and apply their ICT

skills as well as they should. The school actively encourages pupils to use computers for homework to make up for this. The ICT action plan for the current year shows that the school is aware that it needs to act to avoid falling short of national targets for pupil access to computers. The plan seeks to raise standards, but does not show how the impact of strategies used will be measured in terms of pupils' achievement.

53. Despite the unsatisfactory resource provision, pupils achieve very well overall. This is because a very well planned series of lessons for each year group supports teachers in making efficient use of the sessions they have in the suite. The school has maintained the high standards reported at the last inspection. Teaching is good overall. All teachers show very good subject knowledge and prepare their lessons thoroughly, using agreed joint planning for each year group. Class teachers, support teachers and assistants give very good support to pupils, circulating, questioning and prompting, although occasionally support teachers and assistants are not deployed well, especially during introductory explanations. Occasionally, teachers spend too much time explaining tasks, limiting still further the time for pupils to develop their skills and apply their knowledge. In the main, however, they give concise, clear instructions, making effective use of the projector, so that pupils spend the majority of their time hands-on. Where teaching is very good, as in three of the seven lessons observed, pupils focus extremely well, collaborating in pairs, explaining to each other and using their time highly efficiently to complete the imaginative tasks set. The school also provides very stimulating ICT experiences beyond those possible at school during annual residential weeks for Year 4 and Year 6 pupils.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

54. Careful planning for the use of the ICT suite ensures very good links with most subjects across the curriculum. Despite the limited time allocation per class, displays and work samples show effective use of ICT in literacy, numeracy and science. In a short, efficiently organised sequence of lessons developing use of an art program, Year 6 pupils created patterns to a high standard, showing a variety of effects following the style of Andy Warhol. In one instance observed, pupils made imaginative use of ICT skills, literacy skills and historical knowledge to create a poster advertising for a wife for Henry VIII. Older pupils' Internet research also results in clearly presented information including text, diagrams and photographs. The subject action plan rightly includes further development of links with other subjects, especially music, alongside the need for increased resources.

HUMANITIES

History

Provision in history is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are good and pupils achieve well.
- Teaching is thorough and stimulating in most year groups.
- The range of learning opportunities is good.
- The use of resources, photographs, videos and artefacts is good.

Commentary

55. Standards are above average. This shows good improvement on the average standards reported at the last inspection. Pupils in Year 6 have above average skills in the use of primary and secondary sources, well exemplified in especially successful lessons on the changing role of women during World War II. Pupils listen carefully to recorded interviews, analyse visual information from contemporary posters and photographs and form their own opinions on how women's roles were changed by the war. The use of hot-seat role play gives plenty of

opportunity for them to express and listen to each other. They have good skills of interpretation. They use their knowledge and understanding of events, such as the evacuation of children, to express their ideas through very good extended writing and the creation of displays of their own war recruitment posters, gas masks, ration books and their own small suitcases packed with their most precious possessions.

56. Pupils benefit from knowledgeable and stimulating teaching in lessons, rich in content. Lessons are well planned with a good range of activities that capture pupils' interest and enthusiasm. Homework is used well to reinforce learning. In their study of the Anglo-Saxons, Year 5 pupils are fully engaged in interesting activities. They make clay pots using traditional coiling techniques, have designed and made some very realistic shields, written their own Anglo-Saxon riddles and designed beautiful illuminated lettering. As a consequence of this very effective teaching, pupils learn well and make good progress. A strong feature of lessons is the way pupils contribute and work co-operatively together. Evidence from written work indicates that pupils are making good progress from the worksheet-based exercises in Years 3 and 4 to much more independent work in Years 5 and 6.
57. Leadership and management of the subject have passed to a new co-ordinator at the beginning of the autumn term. The existing policy document and schemes of work are well developed and are a good match to curriculum requirements. However, there is some evidence that last year not all topics were fully covered. The curriculum time allocation, shared with geography, art and design and technology, appears insufficient for this group of subjects. Resources are good. They include videos, pictorial evidence and a good range of books and artefacts, which teachers use very well to offer stimulating lessons.

Geography

58. At the time of this inspection there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement on the overall quality of provision in geography. Since the last inspection the school has put in place a comprehensive policy document and very well developed schemes of work for the subject. These meet all National Curriculum requirements and seek to provide exciting opportunities for the pupils to extend their knowledge and understanding of the subject. The school has also purchased new, good quality teaching resource books and learning resources and equipment, including atlases, maps, globes, videos and textbooks since the last inspection. The subject does appear to receive insufficient time allocation over each year, however, in order to do justice to the well-developed plans and make best use of the improved resources.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The time available for art is limited over a year.
- The quality of display in classrooms is very good.
- There are examples of above average work in all year groups.
- Good links with studies in other subjects, particularly history and ICT.

Commentary

59. Two lessons were observed during the inspection and pupils' work from the previous year and work on display was analysed. Overall, standards in art are average throughout the school. However, there were some examples of above average work in all year groups. Pupils in Year 3 are making good progress with their painting skills and use watercolour paint and small brushes to good effect. Pupils in Year 6 have painted some good watercolours of African

scenes. However, standards seen are lower overall than at the time of the last inspection, when they were judged above average. The time available for art lessons over the year is very limited. This restricts the opportunity to sustain and improve skills levels and to cover different aspects of the subject year on year.

60. The quality of teaching in one lesson observed was good and in the other satisfactory. Teachers ensure that pupils' work is displayed very well despite some classrooms being cramped for space. The displays are colourful and include many visual aids for learning. In both lessons observed, pupils enjoyed their work and teachers provided good feedback on how to improve. Teachers in Year 6 use ICT effectively to support pupils' learning in art and design. Examples on display show pupils using current icons very successfully in the manner of Andy Warhol's expression of the sixties.
61. The co-ordinator is new to the role but has plans to review provision. The scheme of work cannot be covered in the time available. The work of famous artists is regularly used to support learning and pupils visit London art galleries each year. Each year group has opportunities to study and learn from art in other cultures, using links with the history curriculum particularly effectively. For example, Year 3 focus on Egyptian designs, Year 4 on Japanese and Aboriginal art, Year 5 pupils use Greek and Saxon examples and Year 6 draw inspiration from African art forms.

Design and technology

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are in line with national expectations overall, but samples of finished work seen are limited in number and quality.
- Insufficient time is allocated for pupils to develop their practical making and finishing skills.
- Planning and resources support teachers well, but expectations often appear the same for pupils of differing abilities.
- The subject currently lacks a co-ordinator.

Commentary

62. This subject was lightly sampled during the inspection. In the one lesson seen during the inspection, teaching was very good, but work samples from a range of classes provide an overall picture of satisfactory teaching and learning. This is similar to that reported at the last inspection. Pupils' books show that the full design and evaluation process is given appropriate emphasis. Pupils attain average standards overall. Pupils generate ideas, making detailed and imaginative drawings and plans. They make lists of materials and indicate how they will make their product. They investigate and evaluate manufactured products, biscuits, cartons and shoes for example, to assist them in the design process. However, the quantity of finished products seen is small and the quality only average. For example, slippers made in Year 6 have no special features and rely on choice of fabric for decoration. Stitching is simple and not used for effect. In the lesson seen, in contrast, pupils gained very good understanding of how three different types of levers function through a well-organised practical activity. They used precise vocabulary to describe what they were doing, showing full understanding of the levers' functions.
63. Standards are not as high as they could be because insufficient time is given to the teaching and practice of making and finishing skills. Whilst the inclusion of special events, including specific design and technology days, makes a positive contribution to pupils' learning and enthusiasm, these do not provide a substitute for the continuous development of practical skills through the timetabled curriculum over the year. The detailed scheme of work and good resources support teachers very well in their planning. However, expectations in terms of standards do not differ for pupils of differing abilities. An over-reliance on worksheets in some

instances limits the development of more able pupils' literacy skills. The current gap in leadership and management results from staffing changes, but needs addressing.

Music

Provision in music is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching in class music lessons is very good overall.
- Pupils are enthusiastic, collaborate successfully in small groups and achieve very well.
- Tuition for pupils learning instruments is well organised and effective.
- The school makes good provision for gifted and talented pupils.
- The use of music from around the world helps raise pupils' cultural awareness.
- Singing is good in class lessons but unsatisfactory in assemblies.

Commentary

64. The subject received light sampling during the inspection. Pupils achieve very well overall in Years 3 to 5. It was not possible to judge standards in Year 6. However, achievement in lessons seen is much better than that reported at the last inspection, when it was satisfactory. Teaching is consistently at least good and very good overall. Teachers use year group planning to very good effect in preparing their lessons, so that subject specialists and non-specialists alike interpret the plans extremely effectively. Clear explanations and very effective use of resources on CD result in pupils of all abilities showing high levels of enthusiasm and participation. Teachers organise pupils successfully in small, mainly mixed-ability groups, giving them brief periods of time to work together, practising rhythms or composing effects. Pupils respond very positively to their teachers' high expectations and challenge. Pupils in Year 3 maintained different rhythm patterns alongside each other, maintaining a common beat. Pupils in Year 5 followed difficult African drumming rhythms to create a series of layers in their composition. The scheme of work used makes good use of music from around the world. The subject makes a positive contribution to pupils' cultural development.
65. Singing in assemblies was a weakness during the inspection. The school does not currently allocate time to singing, other than in class music lessons. Pupils do not sing well as a whole school because they are not required to focus on breathing, posture, diction or dynamics.
66. The school makes very good provision for pupils who wish to learn to play a musical instrument and for gifted and talented pupils, who participate in the school orchestra or choir. Musical activities are temporarily suspended following the departure of several staff who took a lead in additional activities. The acting headteacher, as subject co-ordinator, is set to re-engage in that role as soon as current priorities allow.

Physical Education

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in PE are above average overall.
- Pupils of all abilities achieve well.
- Selected pupils reach very high standards as a result of opportunities to participate in competitive sports and gymnastics.
- Teaching is good overall.
- Gymnastics standards average overall, rather than better, due to need for staff training and consistent access to equipment.
- Insufficient focus on standards in the school development plan.

Commentary

67. Standards are above average overall and some pupils demonstrate well above average skills. Pupils of all abilities achieve well. The school has maintained above average standards since the last inspection. Standards are enhanced through the wide range of sporting clubs held out of school hours. Membership of these is generally selective, but gives these pupils very good opportunities to participate in competitions, often with much success. The school is planning further provision for sports clubs with an open membership. At the time of the inspection, clubs were temporarily suspended. The curriculum is enhanced by opportunities to take part in activities such as orienteering, abseiling, climbing, quad-biking and ropes courses during residential visits in Years 4 and 6.
68. In the lessons observed, teaching was variable, but good overall. Teachers use detailed plans, identify clear learning objectives and implement effective organisational strategies and teaching methods. Pupils work at a brisk pace co-operatively and individually, in pairs and groups. Very good teaching in a Year 6 lesson resulted in pupils skilfully selecting and combining movements to represent 'shiver and quiver' and 'kick and start' in response to a poem, initially in pairs and then in larger groups. The teacher effectively assessed pupils' skills and gave ideas that enabled them to improve. The quality of their sequence was further enhanced by the addition of imaginative music. Their performance included elements of symmetry and awareness of space and composition.
69. Pupils usually have opportunities to evaluate their own work and that of other groups. Where teaching was satisfactory, but could have been better, teaching offered insufficient guidance to let pupils know what they needed to do to improve.
70. The co-ordinator has a clear overview of the subject, but the subject action plan shows insufficient focus on measuring standards to check the effectiveness of action proposed. While the school's gymnastics club members reach very high standards, standards seen in this aspect of the subject are average. The action plan recognises this as an area for development and proposes training to support teachers in their planning. Storage of equipment in the hall area is in need of review, to ensure pupils have consistent access to gymnastics equipment. Along with all other subjects, procedures for assessment and reporting are much improved since the last inspection, except in swimming, where the school needs access to records kept by instructors. The school makes the best use possible of its playground, the local playing field and nearby swimming pool to support the curriculum.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

PSHE and Citizenship

Provision in PSHE and citizenship is **excellent**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils throughout the school and particularly in Year 6, show very mature personal qualities.
- Excellent subject co-ordination.
- An excellent curriculum.
- Outstanding teaching.
- The subject has a high profile and underpins the school ethos.
- One very positive outcome of the strong provision is the very effective school council.

Commentary

71. The school's provision for PSHE and citizenship underpins its ethos. Through the extremely well planned programme for each year group, all pupils develop increased maturity of outlook and respect for each other's views and beliefs. The programme includes carefully considered provision for sex education and drugs awareness. The co-ordinator has an excellent overview of all aspects of the school's provision which overlap or touch on personal, social and health education, including the school's policies on behaviour, bullying and race awareness.
72. Through regular weekly lessons, following the well-considered framework for each year group, pupils develop respect for their teachers and each other. This maturity of outlook shows in their attitudes to work in lessons, but also in their manner around the school, in their readiness to accept responsibility, as shown in the playground buddy system for example and most obviously in the workings of the school council.
73. It is the whole staff's strong and highly effective focus on personal development alongside academic prowess that makes St Stephen's the very effective school it is.

Teaching observed included this example of excellent practice:

Example of outstanding practice

An excellent series of teaching strategies combining to create an outstanding PSHE lesson.

The outcomes of the school's provision over four years were exemplified in an excellent Year 6 lesson on the theme of 'risk'. The teacher first organised pupils' participation in a circle time session, offering examples of what risk meant to them. She then outlined a series of situations, including some involving smoking, drinking and drug-taking, to encourage deeper thought about three levels of risk - 'risky', containing 'some risk' or 'no risk'. Pupils chose individually, but moved simultaneously, for each situation quoted, across the room to the sign showing the risk level they felt appropriate. Back in the circle, pupils then explained their choices individually. All listened intently to each other's explanations. The teacher finally organised pupils into small groups, to co-operate in finding ways of minimising an identified risk. She drew the lesson to a close with an excellent plenary session, in which pupils considered and expressed, in a highly articulate manner, ways in which all situations, even sitting in a classroom, contain some element of risk. The levels of thought and discussion were extremely high. The lesson involved every pupil in focused listening, reflection and response to the range of views expressed. It was an outstandingly successful lesson.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	2
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	2
Overall standards achieved	2
Pupils' achievement	2
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	4
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	2
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	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	1
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
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	2
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

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

