

INSPECTION REPORT

ST WILFRID'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND JUNIOR AND INFANT SCHOOL

Newton Heath

LEA area: Manchester

Unique reference number: 105496

Headteacher: Mrs Susan Nickson

Lead inspector: Mrs June Tracey

Dates of inspection: 26 – 28 January 2004

Inspection number: 257995

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:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	225
School address:	Mabel Street Newton Heath Manchester
Postcode:	M40 1GB
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Lord Martin Mathews
Date of previous inspection:	6 July 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St Wilfrid's is a voluntary controlled Church of England primary school situated on the outskirts of Manchester. The school is of average size with a steady roll of about 225 pupils from varied backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who join and leave the school at other than the normal times is about average. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals (52 per cent) is well above average. The school has a nursery and most children proceed through to the main school. It is totally committed to the Sure Start project, which provides families with support from a wide range of external services. Optimum use is made of the accommodation but the buildings are in poor condition and the classrooms are cramped. Attainment on entry to the nursery is well below average; language and social skills are often poor at this stage. Most pupils live in the local vicinity. Almost all are of white UK origin. A very small number of pupils are of mixed ethnic background. None is at the early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is above average. These pupils are not evenly distributed across year groups. They have a range of learning, emotional and speech difficulties. The proportion with statements of need is below average.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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23204	Ms C Wojtak	Team inspector	English Art and design Design and technology Physical education Special educational needs English as an additional language
29504	Mrs S Herring	Team inspector	Science Music Religious education Foundation stage

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

St Wilfrid's is a good school that provides well for its pupils' all-round personal development. Pupils gain in confidence and self-esteem within an enriching learning environment. Overall, standards are below average in Year 6 but pupils achieve well taking into account that attainment on entry is well below average, especially in language and communication skills. Teaching is good. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- High priority is given to the development of language and social skills in the Foundation Stage. This enables children to achieve very well in readiness for Year 1.
- The sharp focus on English in the last two years has brought about a significant improvement in pupils' literacy skills, particularly writing. As a result, by Year 6, the overall standard of work in English is as expected for pupils' age.
- Achievement in mathematics in Years 3 to 6 is unsatisfactory. Pupils' numerical skills in these year groups are below average.
- Provision for pupils' individual needs is very good. Pupils of all abilities, background, race and gender are very well integrated in every aspect of school life. The good team spirit amongst staff and volunteers, together with contributions from outside agencies, promotes a sense of belonging that fulfils the school's mission 'Working Together as One'.
- Leadership and management are effective in identifying areas for improvement and implementing action plans.
- The school's assessment system is not used consistently to identify underachievement and bring about improvement in mathematics.

The school has made good improvement since its last inspection in 1998. Action taken in response to the issues raised at that time have resulted in:

- better provision for information and communication technology (ICT)
- higher standards in English, design and technology, art and design and ICT
- the effective deployment of trained teaching assistants in every class.

In addition, the school is actively promoting adult learning activities for parents and the local community as part of its strategic development plan.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	All schools			Similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	E	E	D	A
Mathematics	E	E	E	E
Science	E	E	E	D

*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.*

Standards are below average overall in Years 2 and 6 but **pupils achieve well** from their starting points. Children achieve very well in the nursery and reception classes. They are on course to meet the goals expected of them by the end of the Foundation Stage apart from language and social development where attainment is below average for their age. Standards vary from one year group to another depending on the proportion of pupils with special educational in each group. In 2003, pupils' average point score in statutory tests taken in Year 2 was above the national average and well above average compared with similar schools. Currently, standards are below average in reading, writing

and mathematics in Year 2 because there is a relatively high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in this year group. Standards are rising progressively throughout the school in English as a result of the high focus on the teaching of literacy skills. In Year 6, standards in speaking and listening, reading and writing are average. They are below average in mathematics because pupils' numerical skills are not developed systematically in Years 3 to 6. Standards in science are steadily improving from Year 1 upwards. At present, they are average in Year 2 and below average in Year 6. The standard of work in art and design throughout the school is above average. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well; many exceed the targets set for them by the time they leave the school. **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.** This is reflected in pupils' good attitudes and behaviour and very good attendance. Relationships within the school are very good. They are indicative of pupils' respect for each other and of their high regard for the school.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Pupils' educational and personal development is underpinned by an exceptionally good support system that involves the school and parents. It draws on a wide range of external services, enabling the school to meet the specific needs of all its pupils. The broad ranging curriculum with its good programme of additional activities is supported by **good teaching** and a high level of commitment from staff and many adult volunteers. Pupils' learning, based on the acquisition of knowledge and the use of skills, is good in those lessons that have an urgent pace. Pupils then know exactly what is expected of them and assess their achievement against the teacher's aims for the lesson. Pupils enjoy learning through discovery in subjects such as history and geography. Teaching is particularly good in the Foundation Stage and English. The thrust on the development of communication skills has improved pupils' reading and writing. Pupils have gained in confidence, enabling them to work more independently and to extract greater enjoyment from learning in other subjects. Teaching in mathematics is satisfactory overall, but, in Years 3 to 6, the programme of study lacks structure. The accommodation is very cramped. It restricts opportunities for pupils to learn through practical experiences.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. The very good leadership of the headteacher is the driving force that is moving the school forward on many fronts. The management of the school is good. It provides stable routines, in which pupils feel secure. Priorities in strategic planning are successfully targeted for completion within fixed time scales. Governance is satisfactory. Governors are passionate about the school and actively involve themselves in training to meet their responsibilities.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very pleased with the quality of education provided and the caring, family atmosphere that makes pupils feel valued. They appreciate the way the school involves them in their children's education and fosters the home-school partnership. A few parents expressed concern about standards in mathematics. Inspectors agree that they should be higher in Years 3 to 6. Pupils think that St Wilfrid's is a very good school because there is always someone to turn to for help and teachers treat them fairly.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- raise standards further, particularly in mathematics in Years 3 to 6.
- improve procedures for assessing pupils' progress in mathematics so that information can be used more effectively throughout the year.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Overall, pupils of all abilities and backgrounds, including those with special educational needs, achieve well throughout the school. Currently, overall standards are below average in Years 2 and 6. This takes into account the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in Year 2; also that the school's strategies for improvement have not yet worked their way through to full effect in Year 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve very well in the Foundation Stage. High priority is given to the development of language and social skills.
- Standards are improving progressively from Year 1 upwards. They could be raised still further, particularly in mathematics. Progress is more consistent in Years 1 and 2 than in Years 3 to 6.
- The standard of pupils' writing has improved dramatically in the last two years as a result of the specific measures put in place to improve pupils' literacy skills.
- Pupils' numerical skills are below average in Years 3 to 6. Pupils lack confidence in the use of mental arithmetic and the application of numerical skills to calculations.
- Standards in English, ICT and design and technology in Year 6 have risen from below average to average since the previous inspection.
- Standards in art and design are above average throughout the school.

Commentary

1. Children's attainment on entry to the Foundation Stage is well below average for their age, particularly in relation to language and social skills, which are often poor. The school provides a stimulating start to school life in the nursery and reception classes. Children achieve very well. By the start of Year 1, most have reached the goals set for their age in mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development. Children's personal, social and emotional development and communication, language and literacy skills are below average at this stage.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	83 (64)	84 (84)
Writing	96 (86)	81 (86)
Mathematics	91 (86)	90 (90)

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

2. Pupils' results in statutory tests taken in Year 2 in 2003 were similar to the national average in reading and mathematics and well above average in writing. Compared with similar schools, they were well above average in reading and mathematics and very high in writing. The standards achieved reflect the school's drive to raise standards, which has been particularly successful in improving pupils' writing skills. The trend in pupils' average point score in National Curriculum tests over recent years is above the national trend. Currently, the overall standard of work in Year 2 is below average. Standards are average in science and below average in reading, writing and mathematics. This represents good achievement for all pupils bearing in mind the higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs in Year 2 than in

other year groups. The steady improvement in standards in Years 1 and 2 is directly influenced by the quality of teaching, which uses techniques and methods to match pupils' individual styles of learning.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	73 (56)	75 (75)
Mathematics	53 (56)	73 (73)
Science	80 (69)	87 (86)

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

3. In 2003, pupils' results in statutory tests taken in Year 6 were below the national average in English and well below average in mathematics and science. Pupils' performance in English was well above average compared with schools with similar prior attainment in Year 2. It represented a dramatic rise on the previous year's results. The improvement in results in English and science over the last two years reflects the highly focused teaching that promotes the development of pupils' enquiry skills and encourages the use of appropriate styles of writing. The downward trend in mathematics is due to pupils' weak numerical skills, which are not being built up progressively year by year. Pupils do not have the necessary skills to calculate in a variety of ways. Currently, standards in mathematics in Year 6 are below average but intensive efforts to raise standards to the expected level for pupils' age are bringing about some improvement. However, overall, achievement in mathematics remains unsatisfactory because pupils did not make sufficient progress when they were in Years 3 to 5. Pupils in Year 6 are achieving well in English and science, especially when their well below average prior attainment in Year 2 is taken into account. Standards are average in English. They are below average in science because only a small proportion of pupils is working at the higher level of the National Curriculum.
4. The school has implemented the National Literacy Strategy well. Innovative teaching methods are improving pupils' reading and writing skills. The effect is evident in the progressive improvement in pupils' work throughout the school in all subjects. Emphasis on the development of speaking and listening skills from an early stage is raising pupils' confidence. By Year 6, pupils articulate their ideas and views with clarity and conviction. The National Numeracy Strategy is having a satisfactory effect on pupils' work in Year 1 and 2. In these year groups, pupils' mental agility in number work is satisfactory; most pupils can transfer the skills they learn to topics such as money, measurement, shape and the interpretation of data. In Years 3 to 6, pupils are not confident in the use of basic operational skills, particularly those involving multiplication and division.
5. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because of the very good support they receive from teachers and teaching assistants. By the time they leave the school many exceed the targets originally set for them.
6. Evidence from examination of pupils' books and observation of practical work indicates that standards in other subjects of the curriculum are similar to those found in most schools, except in art where standards are above average. Standards in ICT and design and technology have improved since the previous inspection when, together with English, they were below average at the age of eleven.
7. Overall, taken across all subjects and year groups, pupils achieve well. The very small number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds achieve equally well. In Years 3 to 6, achievement varies between satisfactory and good from one year group to another. It is particularly good in Years 4 and 6.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and punctuality are good. Attendance is very good, especially when compared with schools in similar circumstances. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has high expectations of pupils' conduct, to which pupils respond.
- Pupils' willingness to show enterprise, use initiative and take responsibility is very good.
- Very good relationships are promoted at all levels.
- The promotion of good attendance and punctuality is excellent. Pupils' understand why they are so important to good achievement.
- Pupils' moral and social development are very good.

Commentary

8. Pupils like school. They are interested in their lessons, show good concentration and work hard in response to teachers' high expectations of the promotion of a good work ethic. Pupils take a full and enthusiastic part in activities. Those identified with special educational needs have equally good attitudes because of the good quality of support. They confidently express their views when they are invited to talk to adults in the review process and at other times. The few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds are fully integrated in every aspect of school life.
9. Behaviour is good both in lessons and when pupils are at play. Relationships between pupils and with adults are very good; pupils mainly play well together in mixed groups and no one is isolated. They develop respect for each other and there is very little incidence of bullying, racism or other forms of harassment in school. Pupils say that bullying is rare and that if any unpleasant incidents occur they know what to do. They are confident that the staff will deal effectively with the problem. Pupils have good levels of self-esteem. They talk confidently with adults and are not afraid to express their views in discussions. There are very few exclusions because the school goes to extreme lengths to correct poor behaviour or attitudes within the framework of its discipline policy.
10. Attendance is very good when compared with schools in similar circumstances. It is similar to the national median. Systems are in place to monitor and control punctuality, which is good. High levels of attendance and punctuality in severe wintry weather on the last day of the inspection are an indication of pupils' regard for the school and what it stands for in their lives. Two classes had 100% attendance that day.

Outstanding practice

The school's action to promote good attendance is known, understood and accepted by pupils and parents. The importance of good attendance is instilled at the earliest opportunity, starting with children below statutory school age in the parent/ toddler group and in the nursery. Establishing high expectations at an early age is carried forward to later life in school. Each pupil knows the class target for attendance and weekly awards are made in assembly for the best attending class. Parents are equally aware of their child's target. Pupils' annual reports contain details of attendance throughout the year and punctuality. Absences are monitored every morning and parents are contacted immediately if notification of absence has not been received.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	5.4
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.4
National data	0.4

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

Exclusions**Ethnic background of pupils**

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Black or Black British – Caribbean

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
217	1	0
4	0	0
2	0	0
1	0	0
1	0	0

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

11. Spiritual development is good and enhanced very well by the positive climate for learning. Pupils have a good understanding of their place in the school and value the fact that their achievements are celebrated. Opportunities for reflection in assemblies and lessons are, however, limited. The school is beginning to benefit from regular visits from the local vicar. He has led several assemblies and shared aspects of life in Tanzania with the pupils.
12. Pupils' moral development is very good. It is consistently reinforced by all staff who are strong role models. This is reflected in the respectful relationships because staff take the time to understand pupils' needs and feelings and help them to take responsibility for their own actions. Often, messages are given through stories and anecdotes told in a way that pupils understand and relate to. Pupils' social development is also very good. It is enhanced through specific lessons in personal development. A good example was seen in Year 5 when pupils learned about democracy in action. After producing posters for different political parties, they debated important issues such as transport, environment and education. The lesson finished with a vote for the party with the best manifesto. Pupils are always encouraged to think for themselves and to celebrate their work with others, such as when, in an assembly, pupils in Year 2 showed the pop-up puppets made during design and technology lessons.
13. Pupils develop a good awareness of the diversity of cultures in a multicultural society. The school achieves its aim of broadening pupils' understanding of other cultures in a very natural way. The younger pupils learn to understand and accept that other people may have different beliefs and cultures. In this way the school endeavours to promote an understanding of the meaning of racial harmony within society. The school has a Race Equality Policy, which is monitored effectively at regular intervals. Pupils listen to, and are actively involved in making a range of music from many cultures.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is good. It underpins pupils' educational and personal development and exemplifies the school's mission 'Working Together as One'. Very good links with parents and outside agencies reinforce pupils' work and extend learning beyond the parameters of school.

Teaching and learning

Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good. All the lessons observed during the inspection were at least satisfactory. The majority was good, and sometimes better. Evidence from other sources, including the examination of pupils' written and practical work, indicates that the teaching observed is a fair reflection of the work that goes on throughout the year. Teaching is least effective, although satisfactory, in mathematics in Years 3 to 6 because there is no overall plan to ensure that numerical skills are developed systematically. There has been a significant improvement in the teaching of English, ICT and design and technology since the previous inspection, mainly because teachers and teaching assistants have gained in confidence and expertise through professional training.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching in the Foundation Stage and English is consistently good. It is the single most significant factor in the rising standards in English.
- Teaching assistants make a very good contribution to pupils' learning in lessons in every class. They provide particularly good support for pupils with special educational needs.
- The school lacks a systematic approach to the teaching of numerical skills in Years 3 to 6.
- Teachers encourage the use of skills across the curriculum, which raises pupils' confidence to apply their learning in a wider context.
- Good use is made of procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress in English and science. Their use in mathematics is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 36 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	8 (22%)	18 (50%)	10 (28%)	0 (0%)	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.

14. The quality of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage is good. Teachers have high expectations of the children, who respond with enthusiasm. The stimulating environment encourages good interaction between children and adults. Pupils successfully learn to communicate their thoughts and ideas and to work in harmony with each other.
15. Overall, teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 are good, particularly in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Teachers train pupils to think for themselves. In a simple way they involve them in the assessment of their own learning by encouraging discussion and evaluation of the work completed at the end of each lesson. Good practice is also evident in teachers' flexible use of techniques based on an understanding of how individual pupils learn best. This can, and does, vary from one pupil to another in the same class. Pupils are not stereotyped into learning through any one particular style. Similar practices are evident in Years 3 to 6 but they are not used as consistently from one class to another. Although teaching is good overall in these year groups, it varies from satisfactory to very good. It is strongest and most effective in Years 4 and 6. The best features of teaching observed included the clear aims, which were shared with pupils, the very good use of teaching assistants to consolidate the work of individual or groups of pupils and the building up of learning through incremental steps. More often than not, the teaching assistants worked with the lowest-attaining pupils,

who needed most help. On some occasions however, attention was focused on other pupils, which brought about a good cross-fertilisation of ideas and exchange of views. Pupils with special educational needs are taught well. Adults act as facilitators and are approachable, informed and helpful. Work is well matched to meet pupils' needs and basic skills are taught effectively.

16. Teachers pay good attention to the cross-curricular themes to encourage the transfer of skills from one subject to another. For example, in Year 6, pupils used enquiry and research skills to link science, art and design, geography and ICT in work based on the theme of water and its impact on our daily lives and the environment. Much of the work across the curriculum is based on discovery and pupils' own interpretation of their findings. This raises pupils' confidence in their ability to work independently. The work is usually marked carefully, with comments and according to the school's agreed procedures, so pupils know exactly what they need to do to improve.
17. Declining standards subsequent to the previous inspection highlighted the need for teaching that focused more acutely on improving pupils' literacy and numerical skills. This, together with other issues, has been at the core of the school improvement plan for the last two years. The decision was made to tackle literacy first because it affected pupils' learning across the whole curriculum. The training of teachers and the implementation of new strategies, particularly for the teaching of writing, have been very successful, as is evident from the improvement in results in English over a relatively short time. In mathematics, teachers have embraced new teaching styles in Years 1 and 2, with good effect. In Years 3 to 6, the teaching of mathematics lacks a clear overview. The teaching in individual lessons is satisfactory, and pupils make some progress, but achievement over time is unsatisfactory because teachers have to spend too much time recalling previous work before they can move on. This is because the school has not developed a systematic plan for teaching numeracy skills and ensuring that pupils are competent in the basic operations such as multiplication and division.
18. The collection and analysis of data relating to pupils' attainment at the end of each year is detailed and thorough. It is backed up in English and science by regular assessments throughout the year so that the teachers can intervene quickly when concerns arise. The school does not track pupils' progress on such a regular basis in mathematics. Consequently, the pace of many pupils' learning in the subject in Years 3 to 6 is too slow for them to reach the required standard by the age of eleven. Teaching in extra classes in mathematics at the beginning of the day for small groups of pupils in Year 6 is raising standards because it is targeting and consolidating fundamental principles that ought to have been tackled in earlier years.

The curriculum

The curriculum is good overall. It is broad and balanced, provides good opportunities for enrichment, and is well suited to the needs of all pupils. The quality of the accommodation is satisfactory, if somewhat cramped, and resources are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is good and places very good emphasis on children's personal development and language skills.
- The programme of study in mathematics does not provide for the systematic development of pupils' numerical skills in Years 3 to 6.
- There are good, planned links between subjects which enhance learning throughout the school.
- The very skilled teaching assistants make a significant contribution to pupils' learning.
- Cramped conditions in some work bases restrict practical activities.
- There are good opportunities for enrichment within and outside the school day.

Commentary

19. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is good. The interesting practical activities in the nursery and reception class, and the high priority rightly placed on developing social and language skills, is well suited to the needs of these young children. It gives them a good start to life in school and prepares them well for Year 1.
20. The requirements of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been adopted to guide teachers' planning. However, the mathematics programme in Years 3 to 6 does not cater for the progressive development of work with numbers. Consequently, pupils' skills in mental arithmetic and their use in calculations are weak.
21. A strong feature of the curriculum throughout the school is the way work in different subjects is linked by a common theme; this reinforces learning well and encourages pupils to transfer skills across subject boundaries. For example, in Year 6 the theme of water has underpinned planning in science on freezing and melting, the water cycle in geography and the significance of water in different religions. The good range of activities involved, including ICT, promoted enjoyment and a desire for more knowledge.
22. Very good care is taken to ensure that pupils with special educational needs have an appropriate curriculum that is suitably matched to their needs. They have equal access to all the facilities provided by the school, including extra-curricular activities. Computers are used well to improve their learning. For example, the spelling mastery program based on words that pupils use most frequently enables them to progress at their own speed. The extra groups set up to assist more able pupils are providing good opportunities for teachers to stimulate pupils through work of greater challenge. Support is put in place swiftly when the need is identified.
23. Provision for personal, social and health education is good. The school has allocated time for specific lessons on the timetable to reflect the importance attached to this aspect. Good guidance and support is provided for all classes, including teaching at appropriate levels to pupils' age in sex education and awareness of the misuse of drugs and alcohol. The school also promotes healthy eating by providing snacks such as fruit at break time.
24. The school is involved in many initiatives to broaden learning beyond the school day. Staff, including teachers and teaching assistants, give freely of their time to lead clubs in a wide range of sporting, musical and other activities, such as choir, football and first aid training. These enrich pupils' experiences. The Breakfast Club is a valued start to the day and is well attended. Pupils' learning is complemented by participation in a good range of educational visits such as to Eym and The War Museum, and also by visitors to school.
25. The previous inspection identified the provision of more paid teaching assistants as an area for improvement when possible. The school has made good improvements. Very skilled teaching assistants work alongside teachers in all classes. They make a valuable contribution in class and support pupils' learning very well. There has also been a good improvement in resources, particularly in ICT and in provision for access to good quality library books.
26. The accommodation remains somewhat cramped, though the staff makes exceptional efforts to improve its appearance with good quality displays of pupils' work. However, the small work bases affect practical work in some lessons. For example, conducting experiments in science is difficult and movement in art and design lessons is restricted because adults cannot move easily between groups to give support where needed. In addition, legitimate conversations from other classes and groups are distracting for pupils in adjacent areas. The computer suite is well used but it can only accommodate half a class at a time. The use of the suite is well organised but having to arrange separate sessions for two half classes reduces access for other use, such as the specialised mathematics programs used by individual pupils.

Care, guidance and support

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff know pupils and families very well, which reinforces the effect of the home-school partnership.
- There is a high level of personal support that is specifically focused on pupils' individual needs.
- The school listens to pupils' comments but there is no formal system for seeking out or acting on their views.

Commentary

27. Child protection procedures are sound and all staff are aware of their responsibilities. The level of supervision at break and lunchtime is satisfactory. A good selection of play equipment is available, but, in the playground, pupils receive very little guidance on how this can be used in a structured way for the benefit of all. Pupils from Years 5 and 6 are keen to act as 'buddies' to younger pupils. They undertake the responsibilities associated with the role seriously, enjoying the opportunities to mix with and support the younger pupils. Overall, pupils feel proud that they can assist the midday supervisors with their work.
28. Very good procedures exist to identify pupils with learning difficulties at a very early stage. This enables them to make progress alongside other pupils without becoming frustrated. Teaching assistants provide very good support, at the same time as encouraging pupils' independence wherever possible. Pupils' individual educational plans are implemented very well by class teachers and support staff. Some of these plans, however, do not specify targets that are short-term, measurable and achievable.
29. The school is subject to vandalism but standards of maintenance and cleanliness are good and vandalism and graffiti are dealt with promptly. This instils high values in the pupils, who show respect for property and resources. There is a clear and consistently applied reward system that encourages good achievement in all aspects of personal and academic development. Pupils have a very good and trusting relationship with adults in school. The headteacher knows each pupil and their families very well. Pupils and parents find approaching the headteacher, classteachers or teaching assistants a positive experience because they know they will be listened to. A very good level of personal support and guidance is available for pupils and parents for life in and outside school.
30. Induction arrangements for children entering the Foundation Stage are good; they promote a sound start that is consolidated as pupils move through the school. There is a good range of opportunities for pupils to become involved with the day-to-day running of the school. However, there is no school council or similar arrangement whereby pupils can collate their views for presentation to the staff and governors.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has very good links with parents and a good partnership with the community. Links with other schools and colleges are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides parents and carers with good information, especially on pupils' progress.
- Good opportunities are provided for family learning and involvement in social and community activities.
- Not many parents actively involve themselves in the daily life of the school, but the contribution of those that do is highly valued.
- Links with other schools and providers in education are very good.

Commentary

31. Parents indicate that they are well satisfied with all the school has to offer, and value its caring Christian ethos. They are provided with a very good level of information about the school's activities and their children's achievement. The annual written reports on pupils' progress are very good and contain good details of the work undertaken in all subjects. Specific, measurable targets for improvement are set each term and pupils know what they have to do to improve. The school does not seek parents' views through regular, formal channels of communication but parents appreciate the open access to staff and the opportunity it provides for them to express their views or concerns. Opportunities are provided for family learning, both during and after the school day. These cover parts of the curriculum, basic computer skills and other topics relevant to pupils' welfare. A small number of parents are actively involved in the school's daily work. They are very well supported by the staff and their contribution is welcomed. There is no parent teacher association but social events organised by the school are well attended and raise valuable funds for the school. Satisfactory procedures are in place for dealing with any concerns or complaints parents may have, but they seldom have to be used.
32. The school has close links with the parents of pupils with special educational needs and their views are taken into consideration at all times. This has not always been the case because there was a short period of time when the school did not have a named key member of staff to manage this aspect of care. Parents are now kept well informed about their children's progress and are fully involved in regular reviews. Several expressed their appreciation of the quality of care received.
33. The school works hard to support the local community and is actively involved in developing a Sure Start programme that incorporates health, welfare and educational objectives. Pupils are persistent and positive in their attitudes towards involvement in local environmental projects, even though, at times, they see their efforts vandalised. The local community makes minimal use of the school resources and enriching learning opportunities.
34. Effective links with the local high schools help to ensure that pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education. The school provides good support for the training of teaching assistants and teachers. It also provides good work-experience placements for pupils in local high schools. In addition, some senior staff, both in teaching and administration, provide management support and advice for less experienced staff in other schools.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of leadership and management is good. Leadership by the headteacher and deputy is very good. It is energetic and forward looking, encouraging enthusiasm and commitment from staff, pupils and parents. Good management by the headteacher and key staff results in efficient translation of decisions and initiatives into effective practices that contribute to the rising standards of attainment. Governance is satisfactorily. It underpins the school's work.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good leadership inspires confidence and ensures that raising achievement is a clearly identified priority.
- The management of mathematics is unsatisfactory.

- The school's commitment to providing equally for pupils of all abilities, backgrounds, race and culture is exceptionally good. It is implicit in all its work.
- There is a good team spirit amongst the staff. Teachers, teaching assistants and non-teaching staff work very hard to make every pupil feel valued.
- Parents are appreciative of the family atmosphere and the welcoming ethos. They are made to feel part of the school.
- The monitoring of individual pupils' progress throughout the year is inconsistent. Classteachers are not held sufficiently accountable for individual pupils' progress over the whole year in mathematics.

Commentary

35. The headteacher has been in post for three years. She has been instrumental in setting the strategic direction of the school and implementing action. Priorities include strengthening the support systems for pupils of all needs and abilities, raising attainment, initially in English and ICT, and the provision of more support from teaching assistants in every class. The very good team spirit amongst staff and volunteers, combined with high expectations of themselves and pupils, is a significant factor in the good improvement since the previous inspection. The headteacher constantly sets new challenges when earlier ones become embedded in practice.
36. Despite the cramped conditions the school operates effectively on a daily basis. Teachers are innovative in seeking to overcome difficulties that might otherwise become an excuse for inaction. There is a quiet calm about the school that inspires confidence. Emergencies are dealt with unobtrusively and handled well. Examples of such action were observed on every day of the inspection. The headteacher and staff have high profiles about the school; pupils and parents commented on the fact that they are readily available and approachable. Leaders of subject areas work well together in planning the curriculum. They regularly compare pupils' work across all classes and subjects, highlighting areas of concern for action. Pupils' performance in tests at the end of each year in English and mathematics are analysed in detail. The information is well used to inform planning in English, but not to the same extent in mathematics. The contrast between the management of these two core subjects, particularly in relation to the work in Years 3 to 6, is very evident. The leadership of mathematics is new this term. At present, the management of this subject is unsatisfactory. English, science and art and design are managed well.
37. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is well managed and owes much to the energy, enthusiasm and drive of the strong leadership. The good deployment of trained teaching assistants makes optimum use of their individual talents, which successfully meet the pupils' needs. Liaison with outside agencies, such as speech therapy, is very effective. It enables the pupils concerned to gain maximum benefit from all the school has to offer.
38. Self-evaluation procedures are a prominent feature of the school's 'in house' work. They form the basis for training and professional development. The effect on pupils' literacy and ICT skills is evident in the steadily improving standards in these areas. The school chose to make these priorities in the first instance because of their importance to pupils' learning across all subjects. The focus of attention has now swung to mathematics. Immediate action has been taken to raise standards in Year 6, but, as yet, the school does not have a clear overview for improving mathematics in Years 3 to 6. The headteacher and governors monitor and evaluate progress in targeted aspects of the school improvement plan. Classteachers are not held sufficiently accountable for individual pupils' progress over the year in mathematics because the school assessment system does not provide them with clear enough targets.
39. The make-up of the governing body has changed since the previous inspection. Many of the governors are relatively new. Governors' support for the school is good. Their overview of its work is satisfactory. The governing body satisfactorily fulfils its statutory responsibilities and is aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The chair is a regular visitor to school. He is familiar with its needs and champions the school's cause well with official bodies whenever the

opportunity arises. Governors are making good use of training opportunities provided by the local education authority. They ask searching questions of the school and do not hold back from challenging its thinking when they have concerns. Spending is prudent and closely linked to strategic planning and the school improvement plan. Financial control and budgetary planning are good. The finance manager and administrative staff make a significant contribution to the smooth running of the school on a daily basis.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	614,342	Balance from previous year	70,990
Total expenditure	643,715	Balance carried forward to the next	41,617
Expenditure per pupil	2,861		

40. Parents express confidence in the leadership of the school. They say that every individual is valued and suitably supported as a member of the community. Taking into account the funding, the school's socio-economic circumstances, the good provision and pupils' overall achievement, the school provides good value for money.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision in the Foundation Stage is **good**. It provides a stimulating and productive start to school life and maintains the good practice identified in the previous report.

At the time of the inspection there were 30 children attending full-time in the nursery and 30 children in the reception class, each class having a qualified teacher and full time teaching assistant. In addition, regular volunteer helpers give good support. Children enter the nursery with skills that are well below average for their age. In particular, the social and language skills of some children are poor. The school rightly places great emphasis on these areas. Activities are suitably practical and good assessment procedures are used effectively to ensure tasks are well adapted to suit the needs of individuals. There is a good balance between direct teaching and the opportunity to choose and learn through structured play. The strong co-operation between all adults in the Foundation Stage provides a warm, secure atmosphere in which children develop a good attitude to school. The consistently good teaching, with very good support from the skilled and sympathetic teaching assistants, enables all children to achieve very well in all aspects of learning, given their low starting point. Nevertheless, by the end of reception, standards in personal, social and emotional development and communication, language and literacy are below average. Most children achieve the nationally recommended Early Learning Goals in mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development by the end of the Foundation Stage.

The leadership of the Foundation Stage has recently changed hands, but the maintenance of good provision and continuing improvement in the curriculum and assessment reflects continuous good leadership and management since the previous inspection. The work of the strong and unified team is well co-ordinated to provide a good learning environment for the children. They strive to find ways to make it even better.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very good relationships help children to develop their social skills.
- The rules and routines are well understood by the children and are consistently applied.
- The good range of interesting activities develops good attitudes to learning.

Commentary

41. This area of learning rightly receives a high profile from when children start in the nursery. It permeates all aspects, enabling children to achieve very well. There is a warm and friendly atmosphere with interesting activities in both nursery and reception, so children are happy to come to school. Children are well aware of what is expected and respond routinely to rules, such as taking a cotton reel when they choose an activity to limit the number of children in any area. Teachers are consistent in their expectations. Good behaviour or effort is rewarded, for example, by giving stickers in the nursery at the end of the day and by remarking on good behaviour when returning from assembly in reception. Similarly, children know the sanctions if their behaviour is unacceptable. Adults treat each other and the children with respect, saying please and thank you when required, and this provides a very good example for children to follow. Teachers make good efforts to promote children's self esteem wherever possible, as in a physical education lesson when children were invited to demonstrate their good work.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Every opportunity is taken to develop children's communication skills.
- Basic skills of reading and writing are taught systematically.

Commentary

42. There are very good opportunities in all activities for children to develop their language skills, which are weak when they start school. Whatever the activity, all adults talk to the children and invite a response; for example, the teaching assistant extends the learning by joining children in the imaginative play area. Children are encouraged to answer in sentences but the speech of a significant number of children is indistinct, though vastly improving. Teachers promote good listening skills. They explain clearly when giving instructions and vary their voice in an interesting way when telling a story. In a very good lesson in the nursery the teacher encouraged a love of books when she used a large puppet, Annie, to help her to tell the story of Goldilocks. The children showed great delight, listened carefully and could retell the story in detail.
43. Letter sounds are taught systematically from the start. For example, nursery children pick up their name card to register their arrival each day; the first letter and sound is picked out for those children who having difficulty. In reception, children regularly practise matching the sound to the letter and find frequently used words in a story. The children share a book with an adult each day and read each evening to their parents. This helps children to develop their reading skills well, though reading is below average overall at the end of reception. Well-targeted support is given to children to help them form letters correctly and shared writing in literacy lessons is taught well. It encourages children to have the confidence to try writing for themselves.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and places a high emphasis on learning through practical activities.
- Mathematical skills are put to good use in other areas of learning.

Commentary

44. The strong emphasis on good practical activities helps children to develop a sound understanding of all aspects of mathematics. In the nursery, children learn to identify shapes by find examples of them in real life. For instance, they know that the windows are rectangles. Higher-attaining children show great excitement as they correctly guess the name of the hidden shape from its description. Children in the reception class are increasingly able to talk about what they are doing using simple mathematical terms, such as *more than* and *less than*. Good quality practical resources are used well to help children link numbers to mathematical operations. For example, children understand that the combining of two sets of similar objects is a form of addition.
45. Satisfactory opportunities are provided for children to practise and develop their mathematical skills in other areas, for example, by making a graph to show how they travel to school or by making patterns out of repeated shapes.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision for knowledge and understanding of the world is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching provides children with a wide variety of opportunities to learn about the world around them.
- Children have daily access to the interesting outdoor area and so learn from first-hand experiences.

Commentary

46. Children are presented with a wide range of activities to promote their understanding of the world. They build with construction toys, plant seeds and watch them grow, and learn about the bones in their body. In a very good lesson on forces, children in the reception class learned that pushing or pulling makes things move. They successfully experimented with vehicles on a ramp to see which travelled furthest. The attractive outdoor area provides regular opportunities to enhance children's learning, such as when they move the wheeled vehicles or work with the teacher to learn how to cross the road safely. In a delightful impromptu session in the nursery, the teacher took advantage of the falling snow to let children learn about the cold and experience snowflakes melting on their hands. Teachers successfully introduce children to different customs and cultures by telling Bible stories and celebrating important festivals of the world, such as Christmas and Divali.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have regular access to a good outdoor play area.
- Children's physical skills are developed systematically.

Commentary

47. Children are provided with many opportunities to use a good variety of implements. They manipulate tools and small equipment well; adults demonstrate how to use them safely. Children in the nursery demonstrated good skills in cutting out pictures carefully; the teacher showed others how to use a hammer to knock nails in safely. Children move confidently, with good control and co-ordination. They use the large space in the hall well for physical activity. The outdoor play area has been imaginatively constructed to provide an exciting adventure corner where children successfully learn to balance and climb along the wooden structures.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good opportunities are provided for children to express ideas using a variety of materials and media.
- Imaginative play areas encourage role-play and support children's language development.

48. The staff plan a wide range of interesting activities which capture children's imagination. The role-play areas are used well for imaginative play; they provide children with opportunities to simulate real life experiences. Children learn a wide range of techniques to create pictures; they paint good representations of objects, such as musical instruments, from close observation. In the reception class, children created lovely pictures of flowers after being shown paintings by Monet. They use collage well to add interest to their pictures. Children are given good opportunities to express their feelings through music and dance, such as when, in the reception class, they moved around the hall and excitedly watched the streamers they were holding twist and swirl.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good leadership in English has dramatically improved standards throughout the school. Overall, pupils' achievement is good.
- Good teaching and the use of information from assessment procedures are contributing to the rising standards. The rate of improvement in reading and writing in Year 2 in 2003 was better than found nationally.
- Teachers have successfully embraced new teaching methods, which are precisely matched to the needs of pupils in each group.
- The school works closely in partnership with a network of outside specialists and is often used for training purposes in innovative techniques in English.
- Overall, progress is more consistent in Years 1 and 2 than in Years 3 to 6.

Commentary

49. Very good leadership has accelerated the development of English in the last two years. Staff training, the introduction of innovative teaching methods and the regular assessment of pupils' progress have contributed to the rising standards. However, there is still more to do. In 2003, pupils' results in the statutory tests for eleven year olds were below average overall although the proportion exceeding the level expected for their age was similar to the national average. The results were well above average when compared with pupils' prior attainment at the age of seven. Standards of work in the current Year 6 are average; pupils are achieving well. They are making up for a dip in progress in Year 5 through arrangements involving reading sessions in small groups, a focus on oral work and, not least, good guidance and practice in writing exercises.
50. Teachers create a plentiful number of opportunities to involve pupils in oral and group work. This is having a positive effect on pupils' learning in English throughout the school. In 2003, pupils' results in statutory tests taken in Year 2 were similar to the national average in reading and well above average in writing. Pupils' performance in writing was very high when compared with similar schools. The overall standard of work in English is below average in the current Year 2. This is because of the higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs in this year group. Pupils of all abilities are achieving well from their starting point on entry. They are making very good progress in writing.
51. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well. In 2003, almost every one of the pupils with language difficulties reached the expected level for their age by the end of Year 6. Good achievement and learning stem from the quality of teaching, which is good overall with examples of satisfactory and very good lessons. Pupils are now making steady progress throughout the school. Previously there was a dip in Years 3 and 5 because the system for

tracking pupils' progress was inconsistent. The subject leader and staff have worked with sheer determination this year to ensure that assessment procedures are used to the benefit of every pupil. Previously, marking was motivating and encouraging but it did not always show pupils how to improve. It does now. Pupils can explain what they need to do to reach higher standards. The most recent changes in this respect have not been in place long enough for the full effect to be seen.

52. Teachers and teaching assistants are extremely hardworking and committed to fine-tuning methods even further. The provision has been completely overhauled in the last two years; strategies have been agreed and implemented consistently. Two in particular are having a very good effect: the practice of writing within a prescribed limit and the insistence on accurate spelling. Pupils are gaining enjoyment and satisfaction from acquiring better literacy skills because they know that their work is improving. Brisk, imaginative introductions and analytical end-of-lesson discussions were seen throughout the school. In Year 2, a very good lesson about the Chinese New Year developed pupils' comprehension and writing skills, as well as giving an insight into another culture. One pupil had brought in items from his trip to Chinatown; this was woven into the lesson in a very natural way. Learning is sometimes less effective when the tasks require all pupils to copy from or complete a common worksheet. This feature is becoming less evident because teachers are increasingly planning for a variety of tasks to meet the needs of pupils of different abilities. It was not the case earlier in the year. Evidence from the scrutiny of work books shows that the pace of pupils' learning has accelerating over time.
53. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are average throughout the school. This represents good achievement resulting from the high priority given to improving oracy skills. On entry, pupils lack confidence in speaking and their listening skills are poor. Teachers' planning for the improvement of these skills is sensitive. It includes many opportunities for 'pupil talk', especially through talking together in pairs. Teachers consistently expect pupils to use language specific to the subject. For example, one pupil in Year 6 confidently articulated the differences between 'broadsheet' and 'tabloid' newspapers.
54. Pupils make good gains in reading from their starting point in Year 1. Standards are below average in Year 2 and average in Year 6. Pupils read regularly to adults and parents make comments in their child's reading diary. Younger pupils are taught good strategies to find the meaning of words. The school has a number of mini libraries, which are adequately stocked and used frequently. The most capable pupils enjoy reading and talk about the different authors and stories, identifying key characters. They have sufficient skills to research information. However, a number of pupils still find reading difficult and their progress is slow. The school is introducing a good 'catch-up' programme to support pupils struggling with their reading.
55. Attainment in writing is average in Year 2. The written work in pupils' books reflects good progress for most pupils, including those with special educational needs. Higher-attaining pupils use conjunctions to join together their ideas. Lower and average-attaining pupils make less use of these. They write in simple sentences containing one idea. In Year 6, attainment in writing is average. Pupils show a growing grasp of punctuation and spelling and are starting to write in different styles. Progress in Years 4 and 6 is particularly good. Pupils make good use of computers to draft and edit their work. They use the spell-check provision well, which increases their confidence to use more difficult words. Overall, the quality of handwriting could be better; teachers do not insist on consistent standards.
56. Relationships are very good and contribute to pupils' good achievement. Teachers manage behaviour well and pupils respect their authority. The school has made good improvement in English since the previous inspection, mainly in the last two years. Partnerships with other school are strong; the school is playing a prominent role in staff training and professional development.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

57. Literacy skills are used frequently and effectively across the curriculum to extend learning in all subjects. Some teachers are more skilled than others in integrating the use of literacy skills into the planning for lessons. Where they do, pupils' ability to express themselves orally and in writing improves the overall quality of their work.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 2. Overall achievement in Years 3 to 6 is unsatisfactory.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well throughout the school.
- Pupils' numerical skills are below average in Years 3 to 6. The curriculum does not provide for their systematic development in these year groups.
- Pupils' attainment and progress are not assessed regularly enough for teachers to respond quickly to any underachievement.
- Management of mathematics is unsatisfactory at present.

Commentary

58. In 2003, pupils' results in statutory tests taken in Year 2 were average, which represents a considerable improvement on previous years when they were well below average. Higher-attaining pupils fulfilled their potential by exceeding the level expected for their age. Pupils' achievement was well above average compared with similar schools. The steady improvement in results in the last three years is due to consistent teaching that consolidates basic number work through application and practice. Lively oral sessions at the beginning of lessons, and at the end, test pupils' understanding and feed into planning for subsequent lessons. Currently, overall standards in Year 2 are below average because there is a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in this year group. Pupils of all abilities are achieving well from their starting points.
59. Pupils' results in statutory tests taken in Year 6 in 2003 were well below average, similar to those in previous years. Detailed analysis of the results showed weaknesses in pupils' mental work and in their ability to manipulate calculations. These aspects are being targeted specifically in the current Year 6 and there is evidence that pupils are gaining confidence in dealing with numerical work. They have much to do to bring their work up to the expected level for their age but there are signs of improvement. At present, standards are below average. Overall achievement is unsatisfactory because pupils have not yet made up the ground lost in earlier years.
60. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 enjoy mathematics even when, at times, they find it difficult. They respond well to teachers' tactics of building up the work in steps based on previous learning. Pupils are satisfactorily learning that there is often more than one way of reaching an answer. The most able pupils make reasonable attempts at explaining their reasoning using the appropriate technical language. In these two year groups the National Numeracy Strategy is providing a good framework for the progressive development of mathematical skills. It is not being used as successfully in Years 3 to 6 because the teaching strategies do not focus sharply enough on building up pupils' number skills. For example, pupils do not know the multiplication tables well enough to apply them quickly in calculations. They are unsure about inverse operations, particularly in relation to multiplication and division. Evidence from the scrutiny of pupils' written work shows that pupils have a satisfactory understanding of shape and measurement, space and the handling of data. Progress in these aspects is, however, slowed down by pupils' lack of mental agility in tackling the calculations associated with them.

61. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. It is good in Years 1 and 2. The lessons observed in the older year groups were satisfactory. There were some good features, notably in Year 6, but, as a whole, teaching in Years 3 to 6 lacks the continuity required for pupils to reach the expected level at the age of eleven. Planning for pupils with special educational needs is good. Teachers work very closely with teaching assistants to enable these pupils to feel fully integrated into lessons. The work is suitably graded so that pupils can recognise the progress they have made, however small the step may be. Throughout the school, good attention is paid to the correct use of mathematical vocabulary, which pupils use well in explaining their work orally. They lack confidence when working with problems written in words because they are often uncertain of how to convert the meaning to its numerical equivalent. Good aspects of teaching within individual lessons include the sharing of aims so that pupils know what it is they are to learn. From an early stage they realise the importance of good presentation of written work and its contribution to accuracy. Pupils respond well to teachers' high expectations in this respect, although sometimes to the extent that the amount of work completed is less than expected. Pupils' work is well marked. Subsequent work indicates that teachers' comments are read and acted upon. The pace of lessons is sometimes slow because teachers spend too much time recalling previous work. This is because not enough thought has been given to how the programmes of study for each year group fit together, in particular that for mental mathematics. Information and communication technology is being used increasingly to support learning in mathematics. Every pupil in Years 5 and 6 is currently working on an individual programme to advance number skills. This is beneficial in improving the flexibility of pupils' thinking and the speed at which they work, but, in itself, it is not sufficient to compensate for the missing elements of mental mathematics in some lessons.
62. The school does not assess pupils' attainment and progress in mathematics regularly enough during the year. Consequently, teachers are not in a position to know what progress pupils are making towards targets for the end of the year. This, together with lack of progression in the teaching and use of number skills in Years 3 to 6, contributes to the below average attainment. The subject has recently come under new leadership. At present, management is unsatisfactory because action to bring about improvement in standards has not been fully implemented. Consequently, improvement since the previous inspection is unsatisfactory.

Mathematics across the curriculum

63. The use of mathematics in other subjects of the curriculum is satisfactory. This is because teachers integrate the elements they require in the planning for lessons. Good use of mathematics was seen in science, art and design, design and technology, history, geography and religious education. Pupils' ability to draw and interpret graphs, handle data, measure and draw to scale demonstrate their innate capability to cope with mathematics, in contrast to the below average overall standards currently being achieved in the subject.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have good opportunities to learn through exploration.
- The cramped accommodation inhibits some practical tasks.
- Assessment procedures are good. They inform planning for lessons and assist pupils in knowing how to improve their work.

Commentary

64. Standards are average in Year 2. They are below average overall in Year 6; the proportion working at the expected level for their age is average but a smaller proportion than usual

exceeds this level. Standards are similar to those at the time of the previous inspection. There has been a good improvement in teaching, in particular in the planning for scientific enquiry, and in procedures for assessing pupils' progress. These are having a positive affect on pupils' understanding throughout the school. The strategies have not been in place long enough to raise significantly the number of pupils in Year 6 achieving the higher level. However, standards in Year 4 indicate an upward trend.

65. Achievement is good overall. Effective assessment procedures, incorporating clear targets, help pupils to understand what they need to do to improve. This is particularly noticeable in Year 6 where the National Curriculum levels achieved are written on particular pieces of work. Pupils know what they need to do to reach the next stage. In lessons, the good attention paid to learning through first-hand experiences consolidates pupils' understanding. Teachers' high expectations challenge the more able pupils to produce detailed observations and conclusions. Lower-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs receive a good level of support from teachers and teaching assistants to help them understand the scientific relevance of their experiences.
66. Teaching and learning are good overall. Each lesson begins with a careful analysis of previous work so that pupils have a firm foundation for new learning. For example, pupils in Year 2 recalled making pots from wet clay, which hardened after firing, before considering other changes brought about by heating or cooling. Teachers emphasise use of the correct vocabulary, writing key words on the board. They make every effort to make lessons interesting and enjoyable to attract pupils' attention. This was particularly notable in Year 4 when the teacher made very good use of role-play to encourage pupils to ask questions. She likened conducting experiments to making a cake, "You need to get all your bits together first!" All teachers set good habits for investigations by providing decisive aims and encouraging pupils to make predictions before testing their ideas. Very good teamwork between the teachers and skilled teaching assistants, and sometimes parents, in all lessons, improves pupils' learning.
67. While staff do their utmost to promote learning through practical activities, the very cramped conditions make it difficult at times. Equipment has to be placed on the tables beforehand, as there is no room for pupils to move freely around the base to select their own. The lack of space also inhibits the regular use of ICT to support learning in science.
68. Leadership of the subject is good. The subject leader successfully promotes learning through exploration and leads by example. Assessment procedures and resources are managed well.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Improvement since the previous inspection is good. Standards have risen from below average to average. Teachers' subject knowledge and expertise have increased.
- Pupils are satisfactorily learning to transfer their ICT skills to other subjects in the curriculum.
- Good links with a local high school are extending opportunities for pupils to work on aspects of the curriculum that St Wilfrid's finds it harder to provide.
- The school makes optimum use of the available resources but they are inadequate. Consequently, scope for the application of ICT skills across the curriculum is restricted.

Commentary

69. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational need, achieve satisfactorily in ICT throughout the school. By Year 6, standards are average overall, and good in some aspects of the work. Improvement since the previous inspection, when provision was unsatisfactory and

standards were below average, is good. Pupils have access to better resources and teachers' expertise in teaching ICT has improved. The most significant factors contributing to the improvement are the provision of a computer suite, the efficient manner in which the subject is organised and pupils' growing confidence in the use of computers as a tool for communication.

70. Pupils are taught the basic skills from an early stage. By Year 2, they know their way round the keyboard and understand the value of being able to file and save their work. They understand that events can be controlled using technology and are gaining satisfactory experience of working with text and images. Evidence from print-outs of pupils' work in Years 3 to 6 shows that their understanding and use of ICT is contributing well to work in other subjects. They know how information is stored in an organised way and how to access it through the internet. In Years 5 and 6, pupils successfully learn how to present material in an appropriate format for its anticipated use. Good work seen included the use of multi-media, text and graphics. Pupils' learning in the older year groups is based on 'What I did' and 'What I found out'. This works well because pupils learn from experience. They are not afraid to experiment in finding their way through files and programs.
71. The computer suite only accommodates half a class but the school's organisation is such that full use is made of the computers throughout the day. Teaching assistants are well trained in the use of computers so groups of pupils can work on them while others complete associated work in the classroom. This is particularly beneficial in cross-curricular work, such as was seen when Year 6 studied erosion. The outcome of research on the computer, and practical work carried out in the classroom, resulted in pupils gaining a profound understanding of the effect of erosion on coastlines and the environment. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 attend a local high school for some ICT lessons. This has manifold benefits because they have access to more sophisticated equipment and teachers in both schools can plan a suitable curriculum to ease transfer at the age of eleven.
72. Very little direct teaching was seen during the inspection but evidence from other sources indicates that teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teachers' subject knowledge is well used and the school is forward looking in its provision. Pupils know what they are expected to learn in each lesson and most have a satisfactory understanding of what they need to do to improve because teachers' make written comments on the print-outs of their work. However, there is no routine system for recording assessment through which individual pupils' progress can be tracked as they move through the school.
73. Provision for ICT has moved on since the previous inspection because of good strategic planning and effective use of the available resources. Management of the subject is satisfactory.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

74. Teachers' planning frequently incorporates the use of ICT. There is clear evidence that its use is underpinning work across the whole curriculum. The extent to which this occurs is limited only by the facilities. There are no computers in the classrooms in Years 1 to 6. Consequently, it is difficult for pupils to use ICT spontaneously in response to a particular situation that might arise in a lesson. Good use is made of the computers before school. For example, every pupil in Years 5 and 6 is working on an individual program to reinforce the acquisition and use of number skills. This provides pupils and teachers with a measure of progress in relation to pupils' personal targets. Pupils are enthusiastic about using the computers in this way because they can see immediately the effect of their learning.

HUMANITIES

75. History and geography are taught alternatively in conjunction with the main curriculum theme for the half term. For example, in geography, pupils in Year 6 were studying coastal erosion in connection with water, the current topic across all subjects. History and geography are taught through 'discovery'. Pupils successfully learn how to search for material and interpret the

evidence. They show a good regard for the past and know that it provides the clues to past events and lifestyles. They understand the difference between accurate factual evidence and opinions. Cross-curricular links between subjects are well planned, especially in connection with the use of ICT. Pupils use this competently, both to search for information and to present the outcomes for visual presentation. Displays of pupils' work, such as on 'The Great Fire of London' in Year 2, are typical of pupils' combined efforts in the planning and execution of the work. This particular display was initiated by pupils' discussions and was executed with good attention to detail. Similarly, in geography, pupils interpret data with care, especially when it contains an element of prediction, such as in weather forecasting.

76. It was only possible to observe a few lessons in history and geography so it is not possible to make judgements on teaching. However, the quality of pupils' work and the extent of their knowledge and understanding indicate that standards are average.

Religious Education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development.
- Very few opportunities are provided for pupils to learn about different world faiths through visits or visitors to school.
- There is no designated co-ordinator for the subject at present.

Commentary

77. Standards in Years 2 and 6 are broadly in line with the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Pupils have a sound understanding of their own Christian religion in this denominational school and are also developing an understanding of the beliefs of people from other world faiths. There has been an improvement in Year 2 since the previous inspection because pupils now learn about other faiths.
78. Achievement is satisfactory overall. There is a good emphasis on discussion, with all pupils making a contribution. Pupils are challenged to record their ideas in appropriate detail according to their literacy skills.
79. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Stories are told in an interesting way to attract and hold pupils' interest. Their responses to questions show that they learn well through listening carefully. Teachers encourage pupils to discuss the implications of Bible stories. For example, pupils in Year 2 offered sensible thoughts about the change in Jairus's feelings after Jesus had healed his daughter. Good links are made with other subjects, such as when, in Year 6, pupils examined the importance of water in different religions. Older pupils add depth to their work through searching for additional information on the internet. The school has developed closer links with the church of late. Pupils benefit from talks by the local vicar and from visits to the church. They satisfactorily learn about other world religions through stories and looking at artefacts, which makes a good contribution to their personal development. At present, this is not backed up by opportunities to visit a wider range of places of worship.
80. Currently, the school is without a designated co-ordinator for religious education. This is a barrier to improving provision in the subject. Monitoring and assessment of pupils' work over time is in abeyance.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

81. Pupils' work was sampled in design and technology, music and physical education. Only a few lessons were observed in these subjects, most being of a practical nature. These, together with other evidence and scrutiny of some of the finished products in design and technology, indicate that standards in the three subjects are average and similar to those seen in most schools.
82. Pupils take part in a good range of musical activities within and outside lessons. For example, the choir recently performed in the presence of the Lord Mayor at the opening of the new Sure Start project. Pupils in Years 3 to 5 receive recorder lessons from a visiting specialist; pupils in Year 2 have weekly lessons from an African drummer. These provide enjoyment and good musical experiences as well as promoting pupils' cultural development. The standard of singing in assembly is average.
83. Design and technology is taught intermittently throughout the year. The finished products examined during the inspection indicate that standards are average in Years 2 and 6. The work seen was always clearly linked to a purpose and ideas were carried through to fruition. Products were tested to determine the extent to which they fulfilled their intended purpose. Subsequently, they were modified, enhanced or re-worked until they were of an acceptable standard. It was not possible to make a judgement about the quality of teaching but pupils' very positive comments and the high quality of the products available for inspection suggest that it is at least satisfactory.
84. Standards in physical education are average in Year 2. By Year 6, overall standards in swimming, games, gymnastics and dance are similar to those expected for pupils' age. A wide range of opportunities is provided. The school grounds offer very good opportunities for ball games. Many pupils have discovered good ways of channelling their energy and enthusiasm through working in teams. This reinforces the school's endeavour to build on team spirit and foster a sense of sharing.

Art and design

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average throughout the school and achievement is good.
- Good use is made of ICT to add a wider dimension to pupils' work in art and design.
- The recent Art Day and the improved whole-school approach to the quality of display is raising the profile of the subject.
- Teachers' and teaching assistants' knowledge and understanding of the subject are good and there is a commitment to high standards.
- Pupils select and use a range of equipment and materials well. They critically evaluate their own and other pupils' work showing good understanding of the criteria for judging its quality.

Commentary

85. Improvement since the previous inspection is good. A focus on the development of specific skills has raised the quality of pupils' work. As a result, standards are above average throughout the school. Pupils achieve well and take a genuine pride in their work. They are taught to work accurately and carefully. For example, in Year 1, pupils competently marked out rectangles on polystyrene tiles and painted them meticulously in blocks of colour to represent the style of Mondrian. Older pupils in Year 5 showed that they knew how to apply measuring techniques to produce well-proportioned drawings of their own faces. Information and communication technology skills are used well in art and design, although there is a limit to the number of pupils who can work in the ICT suite at one time. Pupils in Year 6 produced some inspiring and meaningful pictures using aboriginal symbols, so much so that other pupils were able to interpret the messages and evaluate the pictures.

86. The quality of artwork on display and in portfolios indicates that standards of work are above those normally seen in most schools. The range of work is extensive and includes strong links with other subjects. Of particular note is the amazing 'Excellence and Enjoyment' display in the hall. The enthusiasm for the activities that gave rise to this display is evident: pupils talk excitedly about how it was created and what they feel about having worked together on the project.
87. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers are sure of their subject knowledge and know how to inspire pupils. Planning is good and pupils find that 'time flies' in lessons because the work is interesting. Techniques are explained very clearly, making it easy for pupils to follow instructions and see the immediate effect of their application. Consequently, they gain in confidence. This becomes even more obvious when they evaluate their work. Teachers ask probing questions that lead pupils to considering how they can improve their work further.
88. The subject is well led and managed. The space available for practical work is limited but teachers find creative ways of overcoming the problem. Procedures for assessing pupils' progress need further development.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

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

89. Evidence from planning shows a good curriculum that supports pupils in their personal development. It includes sex education and education on the dangers of the misuse of drugs and alcohol. The programmes of study provide pupils with good information to help them make decisions about their own lives. Specific lessons and focused assemblies are now regular features in the curriculum, and are used effectively. They are based largely on oral work and visiting specialists. Pupils are given good opportunities to listen, think, and speak as they explore a variety of issues relevant to their own circumstances and ambitions.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	1
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	5
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	2
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	5
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	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	2
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).