

INSPECTION REPORT

ST WILLIAM'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Ince-in-Makerfield, Wigan

LEA area: Wigan

Unique reference number: 106497

Headteacher: Mr C Burke

Lead inspector: Lynne Read

Dates of inspection: 2 – 4 February 2004

Inspection number: 257997

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	3-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	229
School address:	Ince Green Lane Ince-in-Makerfield Wigan Lancashire
Postcode:	WN2 2DG
Telephone number:	01942 235782
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Martin Trumble
Date of previous inspection:	26/4/1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St William's RC Primary serves an area of Ince-in-Makerfield that is part of the national Regeneration Scheme. Social and economic circumstances are well below average and children entering the reception class have a range of learning experiences and attainments that are well below those typical for the age group. With 229 pupils on roll, it is roughly the average size for a primary school. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs (14 per cent) is just below average and all of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties. Just under two per cent of the school population has a statement of special educational needs and this is around the national average. Over 28 per cent of pupils claim their entitlement to free school meals which is above average. Most pupils are of a white, British background and a few have Asian heritage. Around four per cent are Traveller children. All but two pupils speak English as their first language. The school has the Activemark, Healthy schools and Investors in People awards.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The standards at St Williams are **improving and it provides a satisfactory education for the pupils**. They **achieve well in most areas and have very good attitudes**. There are **some strengths** in the teaching and **some areas for development**; overall it is **satisfactory**. Leadership and management are **satisfactory**. All groups of pupils are **well supported** and have access to all the activities that the school has to offer. The school provides **sound** value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The headteacher, governors and staff are firmly committed to raising standards.
- Achievement in reading, mathematics and science is good.
- The provision and learning in the Foundation Stage (nursery and reception classes) is good.
- Achievement in writing in Years 3 to 6 is inconsistent although it is satisfactory overall.
- Attainment in information and communication technology (ICT) is below expectations.
- There is very good provision for personal development.
- Pupils have very good attitudes, they behave well and there are very good relationships.
- The curriculum offers a good range of learning opportunities for all groups of pupils.
- The system for setting targets does not provide enough information for teachers' planning in Years 3, 4 and 5 and some pupils' targets are too general and do not provide useful guidance.

Improvements

There have been satisfactory improvements since the last inspection and they are good in terms of attainment seen in lessons, the teaching of reading, teachers' expertise and the deployment of teaching assistants. There is a thorough cycle of self-evaluation in place that provides good information for improvement planning. Systems for setting targets for pupils' learning have improved satisfactorily but there are still some issues to address.

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	E	D
Mathematics	E	E	E	C
Science	B	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.*

When pupils enter the nursery, their prior learning is well below that usually seen. They make good progress in all areas of learning in the Foundation Stage classes and, by the time they enter Year 1 they are working at a level that is just below average. The work seen in Year 6 during the inspection is better than the grades above indicate. For reading, mathematics and science attainment is judged as average by the end of Year 6 and achievement over time is good. For writing, attainment is below average. Achievement is inconsistent in this area; it is good in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory across Years 3 to 6. The school improvement plan over recent years has been focused on improving standards and achievement. The findings of the inspection show that this has been successful in most key areas, except writing. The 2003 test results did not fairly reflect the efforts made by both staff and pupils to raise standards, largely because almost one fifth of the pupils had arrived at the school in the past year. Another factor was the change in the writing and science tests, for which the pupils were not well prepared. Results at Year 2 simply show the standards but not the progress or the achievement. Around one third of the pupils had special educational needs and, relative to their starting point, many had achieved well. Standards seen in Year 2 during the

inspection are judged as average in reading and mathematics and also in writing where there have been good improvements. Some especially good standards were observed in Year 1 with a good number of pupils already working at the higher levels. There are good improvements to the provision for ICT but there remains some work to do and attainment is below average. Attainment in music is above average and it is average for the other subjects. Pupils who have special educational needs, those who speak English as an additional language and the Traveller pupils are well supported and their rate of learning is similar to that of the majority of pupils.

Attitudes

In line with its mission statement, the school **promotes spiritual, social and moral development very well and provision for cultural development is good.** The resulting high standards of pupils' behaviour, their very positive attitudes and very good relationships underpin the good learning seen. Staff work hard to encourage and reward regular attendance but not all families are co-operative. The annual statistics are **below average.**

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

Teaching is good in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2. The quality of teaching is satisfactory **in Years 3 to 6.** **Some strengths** were identified but there are also **some areas for development**, especially in promoting skills in writing and ICT. Teaching assistants are experienced and well briefed. They make a valuable contribution to learning.

Curriculum

There is a good, broad curriculum that successfully promotes pupils' creative, physical, aesthetic and academic skills and meets the needs and interests of pupils of all ages, abilities and backgrounds. The range of out-of-school activities is very good. The accommodation and resources are satisfactory overall and good for ICT.

Care and guidance are satisfactory. There are strengths and one area for development. Pupils form trusting relationships with adults and say that they feel safe. Pupils with special educational needs, those who speak English as an additional language and the Traveller pupils all have the support that they need to access all lessons and activities. However, some pupils' learning targets are too general to provide clear guidance on how to improve.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership is satisfactory and there are some strengths. There is a strong, shared focus on maintaining good provision for personal development, sustaining a broad education for pupils and improving academic standards. However, leadership for ICT is an area for development. There are strengths in management that are evident in the calm, pleasant environment for learning. However, the system of setting targets for pupils' progress does not provide sufficient information to guide the teachers' planning accurately. **Overall, management is satisfactory.** Governors have a sound overview of the school's strengths and areas for development. They are fully committed to the aims and ethos of the school and are currently exploring ways of developing their role further. **Governance is satisfactory.**

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents and pupils have **very good** views of the school. Pupils like their teachers and their friends and enjoy their lessons. Parents appreciate the very good attention to personal development and the fact that staff are very approachable.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- ****Improve achievement in writing in Years 3 to 6.**

- **Improve achievement in ICT throughout school and its use when studying other subjects.
 - Improve the system of setting targets to provide better guidance for teachers in Years 3, 4 and 5 and make better use of the assessment information to set more specific learning goals for pupils, especially in writing.
- ** These issues have already been identified by the school as areas for improvement.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Standards seen during the inspection in reading, mathematics and science are **average** by Year 6 and **below average** for writing. Achievement over time is **good** from the low starting point. Attainment in information and communication technology (ICT) is **below expectations** and in music it is **above expectations**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the nursery and reception classes achieve well in all areas of learning.
- By Year 2 pupils have made good progress and are attaining at an average level in speaking and listening, reading, writing, mathematics and science.
- In lessons seen in Year 6 attainment in reading, mathematics and science is average. These results represent good achievement over time.
- Standards in writing are below average by Year 6 and achievement is inconsistent across Years 3, 4 and 5, although it is satisfactory overall.
- Attainment in ICT is below average and achievement is unsatisfactory.
- Attainment in music is above expectations and achievement is very good.
- Pupils who have special educational needs, those who speak English as an additional language and the Traveller pupils achieve well in relation to their starting points.
- Boys and girls progress equally well in their lessons and over time.

Commentary

1. When children enter the nursery, their skills and knowledge are well below those expected for the age group, especially in language development. For some children, personal skills are also very limited. Children achieve well in the nursery class. By the time they undergo an early assessment on entry to the reception class, their attainment has improved to below average, with especially good gains in language and mathematical understanding. Most children attain the expected learning goals in most areas of learning by the end of the reception year. In communication, language and literacy, attainment remains just below the expected targets but children have made considerable progress over the two years in the Foundation Stage.
2. Achievement in the nursery and reception classes has improved further since the last inspection. The school recognised that the low starting point for many children was a major barrier to learning and governors have invested to provide a good adult to child ratio and a good range of resources so that early learning is well supported and children can get off to a flying start.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	14.7 (15)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	13.3 (13.5)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	15.7(17.5)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 34 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3. The group of pupils who took the tests in 2003 included a third who had special educational needs and their starting points had been very low indeed. The results shown above, that were

well below the national average, were predicted by the school. When compared to schools in similar circumstances, however, the reading and mathematics grades were average. Writing was below average and attainment in this aspect was highlighted as a focus of school improvement over the year. In lessons seen, standards for the present Year 2 have improved to broadly average.

4. Attainment seen for the year group in reading, mathematics and science are also average. Some especially good standards of work were seen in Year 1 where several pupils were working at above-average levels. This is a promising indicator for the future. By the end of Year 2, pupils' spelling is largely accurate, and the higher attaining pupils are writing in sentences that are well-punctuated. Handwriting is not consistently formed or positioned, however, and some pupils' presentation is untidy. In mathematics, pupils are confident in calculating mentally and have a secure understanding of shape, measures and in making graphs and charts.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	24 (25.1)	26.8 (27)
Mathematics	25.4 (25.7)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	26.6 (27.4)	28.6(28.3)

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

5. The results shown above do not accurately reflect the achievement patterns seen throughout school. This is because only 85 per cent of the pupils taking the 2003 tests had received all of their junior education at St Williams. Standards seen in lessons and in completed work during the inspection are average for speaking and listening, reading, mathematics and science and achievement over time is good. In writing, standards are below average, as they were when this group of pupils were in Year 2. Achievement in this one aspect varies across different year groups and accelerates for the older pupils; overall it is satisfactory and improving. The present target setting system sets the goals for each pupil for the end of Year 6 but does not make clear the targets for the other year groups. Teachers therefore do not have suitable guidance for planning to ensure that pupils in each ability group have the challenge that they need. Handwriting is often untidy and there is no 'school style' evident with Year 6 pupils sometimes using print rather than script.
6. The Year 3 pupils make good progress in most areas and the majority of the teaching assistant's time is focused here to help support the high percentage of pupils with special educational needs or whose attainment was below average in the 2003 tests. Pupils enjoy the intervention groups led by a teaching assistant. These are targeted at overcoming specific difficulties in reading and writing and they successfully promote good progress.
7. Attainment in ICT across the school is below average. Many good improvements have been made but pupils' level of skill development is below average and computers are not used enough when studying other subjects. This means that pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to consolidate and extend the skills that they learn.
8. Pupils who have special educational needs achieve well relative to their starting points. They have sessions with a specialist teacher where they work on basic skills and good support in the classroom. Those pupils who speak English as an additional language achieve as well as the majority of the pupils; they benefit from specific tuition in oral English and have good support from teaching assistants. The Traveller pupils have sessions with a specially trained teacher and they have individual learning programmes to help them overcome gaps in their education. Boys and girls progress equally well in class, largely because teachers choose an interesting range of topics to interest all.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and personal development are **very good** and successfully promoted through the **very good** provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Attendance rates remain **unsatisfactory** in spite of the school's concerted efforts to improve matters.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils behave well and show very positive attitudes both to lessons and other activities.
- Relationships are very good between staff and pupils and among the pupils themselves.
- The school provides very good opportunities to help pupils develop their confidence, their ability to reflect and their willingness to take responsibility.
- The very good provision for pupils' moral development results in them valuing and respecting other people's opinions and knowing right from wrong.
- Attendance is lower than average and punctuality is unsatisfactory for a minority of families.

Commentary

9. Pupils have very positive views about their school. They are very interested in lessons and the range of activities provided outside the normal school day. Their behaviour is good in lessons, on the playground and when moving around school. Teachers and pupils flourish in each other's company with very good relationships contributing significantly to the quality of teaching and learning. The Christian ethos permeates all aspects of school life and pupils are encouraged to be thoughtful and caring. Harmony is a strong feature of the school and there is no evidence of bullying or oppressive behaviour. Pupils are encouraged to make decisions and work independently when adults are focused elsewhere. Older pupils enjoy working and playing with the younger ones and this creates a 'family' feel to the school.
10. The majority of pupils attend school regularly but overall, attendance remains below the national average. This is mainly due to poor attendance of a small minority of families and to long absences of the Traveller children. The school receives good support from the education social worker and staff work hard to promote good habits of attendance. Most parents bring their children to school punctually in the mornings and lessons start on time. This has a beneficial effect on pupils' progress and achievement. However, there is a constant stream of late arrivals. The school's policy is to welcome everyone and teachers ensure that latecomers are fully integrated into the lessons.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	9.2
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.1
National data	0.4

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

11. Children's personal, social and emotional development in the nursery and reception classes is very good. Teaching staff and teaching assistants have created an environment in which pupils feel most secure and safe. Pupils are encouraged to make decisions when choosing the order of their activities and children who started the nursery in the last five weeks are growing in confidence and are responding positively to the new routines.
12. The provision for pupils' spiritual moral, social and cultural education is very good and reflects well the mission statement and strong ethos. The school uses opportunities to develop pupils' self knowledge and spiritual awareness and pupils show great respect for the values and

beliefs of others. Pupils are provided with opportunities to reflect on their own successes and they respect the views of others. Pupils do not hide their enjoyment for learning. Reception children were excited when preparing for singing, Year 2 pupils showed disappointment when it was time to go home and a Year 5 pupil was overheard to say 'that was brilliant!' when studying the use of medicine in Tudor times.

13. Provision for moral development is very good. Pupils know right from wrong and are fully aware of how their actions affect others. A range of positive strategies are used to impress pupils of the need to behave well, with more challenging pupils entering into contracts to improve their behaviour. The good conduct of pupils in and around the school is a result of their developing self-discipline and is reflected in the absence of exclusions in the school. Pupils' social development is very good. They gain an awareness of others less fortunate than themselves through supporting charities and 'circle time' provides good opportunities for pupils to share problems and feelings. Pupils learn ways to resolve conflict and they become more familiar with reasons why others respond in the ways they do. The wide range of activities outside the normal school day create opportunities for most pupils to acquire social skills when playing team games such as football, netball and rugby. Good opportunities are sought to enrich pupils' sense of community. For example, they sing to local audiences, use the facilities of a local sports hall, or share resources with other schools. Other activities prepare pupils effectively as citizens of the future: they visit the mayor's parlour; enjoy their involvement on the 'eco-council'; and survey recycling trends. One very good innovation is the 'best citizen' award. This person is chosen by the pupils themselves who give reasons such as 'he cheered me up when I was sad.'

14. Cultural development, including an awareness of growing up in a multicultural society, has improved since the last inspection and is now good. Pupils' have a good awareness of their own culture and have a growing awareness of the customs and traditions of other cultures when celebrating festivals such as the Chinese New Year. They experience a range of cultures from around the world in art and music and appreciate the past when learning about other civilisations and societies in history and geography. Planned opportunities in religious education enable pupils to understand and compare the beliefs of other major faiths such as Islam and Judaism. Links with a school in Africa have assisted in developing respect for others and for widening pupils' horizons.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	223	0	0
Asian/British	1	0	0

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching is predominantly **good** in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 and is satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. Overall, it is satisfactory. There are **some improvements required** in the teaching of writing in Years 3 to 6 and in ICT throughout school. There are **improved** processes in place for checking pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science but targets for future learning are not always specific.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have a good range of subject knowledge, including a thorough understanding of the needs of children in the nursery and reception classes.
- The teachers' planning is good and lessons have clear aims.
- Specialist teaching enhances learning in some subjects.
- Teaching assistants are knowledgeable, well briefed and effectively deployed.
- Teachers use a range of strategies and resources to challenge, motivate and encourage pupils.
- Staff ensure that pupils who have special educational needs, those who speak English as an additional language and the Traveller children are fully involved in all lessons.

Commentary

15. The teaching in the nursery and reception classes is good with very good features. Children have an inviting range of activities where they can explore and investigate. Adults encourage them to be independent learners and place a strong emphasis on developing their communication skills. Thorough records of progress are kept and these are well used to plan the next steps in learning. As a result of the good provision, children achieve well.
16. In Years 1 and 2, the vast majority of teaching seen was good and a significant percentage was very good or excellent. Teachers focus on developing a solid foundation in literacy and numeracy. There have been good improvements in the teaching of the letter sounds since the previous inspection. Teachers place a strong emphasis on this area and often include reading and spelling games in the lessons so that pupils can practise what they have learned. During guided reading sessions, pupils learn to use a good range of strategies to help them tackle new texts and in mathematics lessons, they try out different approaches to problem solving. This prepares pupils effectively for the more demanding curriculum in the junior classes.
17. In Years 3 to 6 there was a balance between good and satisfactory teaching. There are strengths in the teaching but also some areas for development. Teachers pay good attention to developing speaking and listening skills and extend this into drama work. Reading skills are well promoted and, by Year 6, pupils are able to research effectively and express clear preferences for fiction material. Some very good teaching of writing was seen for the older pupils where a shared text was used effectively as a model to extend pupils' skills. This strategy is not used consistently in the other classes, however, and teachers often set English exercises rather than providing opportunities for independent writing. The targets set for English are sometimes vague or general and too many are based on grammar, spelling and punctuation rather than the essential skills of organising writing for a purpose or on developing a mature style. The teaching of basic skills in mathematics and science is good and pupils achieve well. There are few opportunities, however, for pupils to pose their own problems or to choose how to record their work.
18. There have been sound improvements in the teaching of ICT since the previous inspection but some weaknesses remain and it is unsatisfactory overall. Teachers now have better subject knowledge but insufficient time is given to teaching the basic skills in ICT and there is limited use of ICT when teaching other subjects. This is the major factor behind the below-average attainment. Recent technical problems have not helped the situation and the school has fully recognised the issue by producing a priority action plan for improvement.
19. Throughout the school, teachers share the learning target with the pupils at the beginning of each lesson and then review the success achieved at the end. This is helping them to evaluate their own progress and to become independent learners. Very good relationships are an important feature in lessons. Teachers set high standards and expect pupils to work hard. Pupils rise to the challenge because they know that their efforts are valued and will be rewarded through praise and encouragement. This is helping them to develop good industrious habits and an intrinsic love of learning.

20. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. Specialist teaching has been developed and is proving successful in allowing a wider range of pupils to take advantage of teachers' particular skills, for example in science, mathematics, music or physical education. The headteacher and subject managers evaluate the success of teaching and there is a sound programme of training in place to enhance skills. Teaching assistants know the expected learning outcomes for the group or pupil with whom they work and are conversant with the specific learning programmes for those pupils who have special educational needs, who speak English as an additional language or who are Travellers. One assistant has been specially trained and runs a successful programme of intervention lessons in English for those who are experiencing difficulty. A specialist teaching assistant and the nursery nurse who work in the Foundation Stage are very knowledgeable about the needs of young children and both play a major role in teaching and learning. The teaching assistants take advantage of training opportunities to enhance their expertise and work in effective teams with the classteachers.
21. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good and they achieve well relative to their starting points. Pupils who require additional help are identified as soon as possible when they begin school. The special educational needs co-ordinator, together with the class teacher, discuss and develop pupils' individual education plans. Teachers use skilful questioning to ensure that pupils are fully included in lessons, so enabling them to make consistent gains in their learning. The budget has allowed the employment of a special needs teacher for the year who plays an important part in boosting basic skills and confidence. Teaching is good for pupils who speak English as an additional language and for the Traveller children. Both groups have specialist teaching sessions and teachers produce education plans to address any gaps in learning. As a result, pupils progress well.
22. Taking into account the many strengths seen in teaching together with the areas for development in ICT throughout school and in writing and independent learning in Years 3 to 6, teaching is judged as satisfactory overall.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 43 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (2%)	6 (14%)	25 (58%)	11 (26%)	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

There is a **good**, broad curriculum in the school including that in the nursery and reception classes. The accommodation and resources meet the needs of the curriculum adequately overall and are **good** for those children in the Foundation Stage.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum in the nursery and reception classes is effective in meeting the needs of the children and in promoting successfully all the areas of learning.
- The school effectively promotes learning across the academic, physical, creative and personal elements of pupils' development.
- There are very good opportunities for enrichment, for example through very good extra-curricular activities in sport and the arts.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and leads to good progress being made by these pupils.
- There are limited opportunities for pupils to practise and extend their skills in ICT and writing throughout their work.
- The library is not organised effectively; some books are old and they are not catalogued appropriately.

Commentary

23. In the Foundation Stage, the curriculum is well resourced in terms of learning resources and staffing is very good. The actual classroom for the reception children is very small but the teacher makes imaginative use of the shared resource area to ensure that all the full range of practical activities are available for the children. Learning is well planned and includes a good amount of practical work so that children are free to explore and investigate. The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs. Their individual education plans have clear targets that teachers, parents and the pupils themselves can understand. They are largely taught with their peers, but some work in small groups for one session per week with the specialist teacher and this promotes effective progress. The school ensures that, wherever necessary, pupils receive specific support from outside agencies. The Traveller pupils have planned sessions to meet their needs and those who speak English as an additional language have extra help with oral and written work.
24. Daily literacy and numeracy sessions based on the national frameworks are taught in each class and this is having a positive effect on the quality of educational provision. The time between break and lunchtime in Years 3 to 6 is not always well used, however. In some lessons, the teacher breaks up the time to deliver energetic, sharp and challenging literacy or numeracy lessons, followed by another short session such as drama. In other classes, however, the lessons simply run on for an hour and a quarter and the pace of learning drops to satisfactory rather than good. The school has adopted the nationally recommended planning for most other subjects, providing good breadth and balance across creative, aesthetic and practical areas. The curriculum for music is especially good and promotes high standards. The volunteer specialist music teacher makes a major contribution to learning and helps to maintain a high profile for the subject in school. Lessons are taught by both the classteacher and the specialist so that pupils have very good interventions in their learning and make good progress. The school has the Activemark award because of the good quality of the provision for physical activities, both in and out of school time. The attention to developing good eating and exercise habits is recognised through the Healthy Schools award. At present, the staff are working towards eco-school status and are constantly on the look-out for ways to enrich the curriculum even further.
25. A new scheme of planning is in place for ICT that clearly shows how skills can be consolidated through work in other subjects. However, it is not fully implemented and, at present, some valuable opportunities are missed. Some teachers build in opportunities for writing across the curriculum but this is not consistent across all classes. The English manager is aware of this fact and has plans to include specific guidance into the other subject plans, such as geography or history. The school pays good attention to developing personal and social and health education through timetabled lessons and discussion time. Issues such as healthy eating, exercise and dental care are dealt with in other subject areas, particularly science. There is an appropriate policy and lessons are planned for sex and relationships education and for drugs

awareness. Environmental issues are highlighted and discussed through the pupils' eco-council and this provides a good enrichment for citizenship education.

26. There is very good provision for extra-curricular activities which enriches the experiences of pupils. In returned questionnaires, all parents agreed that there is a good range of activities out of school time. At the parents' meeting it was obvious that this part of the school's work was highly valued. Such activities, which include provision for reception children to Year 6 pupils, include a good choice of sporting experiences together with musical and artistic sessions. The school has developed beneficial links with local organisations. For example, members of the rugby club provide coaching, links with a local charity provides funding, management and staffing for some out of school activities and a local community centre provides before and after school care. The wide range of activities, visits, visitors and residential trips add much to the breadth and relevance of the curriculum.
27. Resources overall are adequate and, for ICT, they are good in quality and quantity and well located. Accommodation for the children in the nursery is good but the teacher in the reception classroom has to use the shared resource area in order to provide a good range of activities. This limits the options available for the Years 1 and 2 classes. There is sufficient and suitable space for teaching in the remainder of the school and the hall provides a good resource for physical education and for school performances. The library is well sited and furnished and includes good computer access for research but the non-fiction books are not catalogued for ease of reference and some of the stock is worn or out-of-date.

Care, guidance and support

The school provides a **satisfactory** level of care. The support and guidance given to pupils for their personal development is **very good** and there are **very good** relationships between staff and pupils. The guidance given for pupils' academic development is variable and is **satisfactory** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The relationships in school are good and are successful in promoting a feeling of safety and security in the pupils.
- Some learning targets, especially in writing are vague and do not clearly show pupils how they might improve.
- Arrangements for helping children to settle in to the nursery and reception classes are very good.
- Pupils share in the decision-making processes through the school eco-council.

Commentary

28. Teachers know their pupils well and are aware of their personal development needs. When asked, pupils say they know what to do if they have a problem and are confident that it will be sorted out. The guidance available for pupils for their academic work is satisfactory. They have learning targets that are discussed and explained and generally help them to improve. Sometimes, however, these comments are too general to be effective. For example 'try to spell words accurately' does not prompt the pupil to use specific spelling strategies or explain precisely where he or she is going wrong.
29. There are suitable procedures for child protection in place and staff are well aware of the procedures to be followed. Pupils who have special educational needs have good guidance and parents or carers are aware of their learning goals so that they can help at home. The Traveller pupils have extra support to work on areas missed due to extended absences. Those pupils who speak English as an additional language receive good support in the classroom and through specialist tuition. All groups are thus able to make good progress and to access the full range of experiences that the school has to offer.

30. There are very good induction procedures for pupils entering the nursery class. There is a useful programme of visits and information that allows parents and children to familiarise themselves with their new surroundings and to form productive relationships with staff. Teachers work hard to prepare children for the reception class and, as a result, they move into full-time schooling easily. Year 6 pupils have a good programme of visits to prepare them for the next phase of their education.
31. Pupils hold very positive views of the school and say that they like their teachers and friends. A school council has been formed recently and the pupils have greeted this opportunity with enthusiasm. Those pupils who serve on the council are already beginning to produce ideas for improving the school environment, based on consultations with their classmates.
32. There is a health and safety governor in place to oversee this important aspect. Checks are timetabled and carried out diligently but they are infrequent. In the current situation, with the site manager's role split between two people and the headteacher having a heavy teaching commitment, a more regular, thorough programme of risk assessments by the governors would be useful.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

There are **many strengths** in the school's relationship with parents; overall it is good. Links with the community and with other schools are **good**.

Main strength and weaknesses

- The school deals well with parental concerns and complaints.
- A few parents do not support the school in its attempts to improve attendance.
- There are good educational links with other schools that benefit pupils.
- Links with the local community provide pupils with opportunities for enhanced learning.

Commentary

33. The results of the pre inspection questionnaire and the comments made at the parents meeting indicate that the vast majority of parents are pleased with the quality of education that the school provides. An analysis of the returned questionnaires shows that all the parents agree that:
 - their children make good progress;
 - staff encourage their children to become mature;
 - there is a good range of activities out of lesson time;
 - arrangements for the children to settle in at the start of school are good.
 This is a strong endorsement for the work of the school.
34. There are no formal consultation procedures by which the school can obtain parents' views but the parent governors are instrumental in gathering opinions. In returned questionnaires, all parents agreed that they felt comfortable approaching school and 92 per cent felt that the school sought their views. Teachers work hard to involve parents in the education of their children and all agreed that 'the school explains how they can help their children at home'. There have been good improvements in the way that parents support their children's reading development since the last report.
35. The school provides satisfactory information for parents. Through the school prospectus, the governors' annual report and regular newsletters, parents are kept informed of events. The two parents' evenings each year are well attended and this shows a good commitment on the part of parents to support their children's education. There is less support, however, from a minority of parents when it comes to ensuring regular attendance and this is the one weakness in the

partnership. Annual reports provide parents with information on their child's academic progress but they do not give guidance or targets for pupils' future development. Parents are invited to make comments on the reports and they like the fact that teachers are freely available to discuss any issues that arise.

36. Pupils benefit from good links with the partner secondary school; there are clear arrangements for the transfer of pupils from Year 6 to Year 7. Visits to St William's by staff from the secondary school, and the 'taster days' at the secondary school for pupils in Year 6, ensure that they move smoothly to secondary education. The process gives pupils a feeling of continuity that helps them to settle more quickly into the next phase of education.
37. The school has fostered strong links with local businesses; visits to the local supermarket and other places of interest, including the hospital and a building site, give pupils an opportunity to extend their learning out of the classroom. It also gives them a good insight into the work of the local community. The business links are effective in providing extra resources for pupils' work and play.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management at the school are **satisfactory** overall. This judgement reflects strengths and areas for development. Strengths lie in the good standards in personal education and the drive for raising academic attainment. The areas for development include a need to improve the setting of targets for learning and to develop ICT provision. **Good** day-to-day management enables the school to run smoothly. Governors provide **satisfactory** support and are keen to develop their role further.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The leadership of the headteacher and subject managers is driving standards upwards.
- Day to day practice reflects the success of the school's commitment to ensuring that all pupils have full and equal access to all parts of school life.
- Governors have a sound overview of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and have a long-term vision for development.
- Information gathered from the self-evaluation programme is used effectively in school improvement planning.
- The target setting records do not provide enough information year on year to guide teachers' planning and to devise precise targets for pupils.

Commentary

38. The school successfully lives out its mission statement by providing a caring environment where all pupils, regardless of any special need they may have, are fully integrated into all activities. The headteacher is well regarded by parents who value his approachability and commitment. There is a clear vision for future development that is based on improving standards further. Examples of the drive for improvement include:
 - more rigorous assessments of pupils' progress and a detailed record showing each pupil's progress over time;
 - the action taken to improve standards.These examples demonstrate the willingness of staff to accept the challenge to improve academic achievement. At the same time, leadership is successful in promoting an all-round education where creative, aesthetic and physical skills are valued. The strong Christian ethos of the school is reflected in the very good standards of pupils' personal development, their enjoyment of lessons and their willingness to work hard.
39. The school constantly looks to improve provision by engaging in projects and seeking out awards. Much work on management, leadership and the professional development of staff has

been completed for the Investors in People Award and senior managers are currently involved in a primary leadership programme to improve their skills further.

40. There is an effective cycle of self-evaluation that includes a planned programme of monitoring teaching and learning by the headteacher, senior managers and subject managers. Data from national and optional tests is analysed and the results lead to direct action. The new tracking and target setting system is useful in setting targets for pupils' attainment at Year 6 but does not help the teachers plan work in Years 3, 4 and 5. It does not allow the headteacher and subject managers to check that individuals, classes and year groups are making the expected progress. The school recognises the issue and the headteacher, together with the assessment manager, is currently considering better ways of managing the processes.
41. All staff, including teaching assistants and non-teaching personnel, are included in regular performance reviews where a programme of training and development needs is established. Support staff and teachers are deployed effectively to meet the specific needs of individual pupils and to maintain good provision for the children in the nursery and reception classes. The school administrator has a good deal of expertise and covers a varied range of duties to provide good support. She uses ICT effectively and efficiently. The accommodation and resources are generally used efficiently although the computers are not used to full advantage. Best value is routinely sought when making purchases but the governors do not have consistent processes in place to check whether spending allocations have led to improvements in teaching and learning.
42. The school provides sound value for money taking into account:
- the sound quality of education,
 - the good achievement seen in reading, mathematics and science,
 - the strengths and areas for development in leadership and management and costs that are around average.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	468,957	Balance from previous year	28,000
Total expenditure	475,552	Balance carried forward to the next	21,404
Expenditure per pupil	2,222		

43. The expenditure per pupil is in the middle to upper range when compared to schools nationally. There are high staffing costs at the school and governors have to make some hard decisions when deciding on budget allocations to support improvement planning. The balance held is within the recommended limits and is intended as an emergency reserve.
44. The governors are supportive of the school and have a wide range of expertise and experiences. They have an informed view of the school's strengths and the main areas for development. Parent governors act as good communicators but they have no formal system for collecting and considering parents' and pupils' opinions. There are link governors in place for literacy and numeracy and for aspects such as special educational needs and health and safety. They maintain sound communications and support but there is scope to improve their role further by being more actively involved in the target setting and tracking processes. Governors are fully involved in the decision-making processes that lead to school improvement planning and check on the success of the work covered. They firmly believe that all pupils should have full access to the curriculum and commit a significant element of funding to enhancing the provision for pupils with special educational needs.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for the areas of learning in the Foundation Stage (the nursery and reception classes) is **good**.

Commentary

45. When children join the nursery class, their prior learning varies widely. Many have a level of skills and understanding that is well below what is expected for their age. An effective introductory programme and strong links between teachers and parents smooth entry to both the nursery and the reception classes. Children are given a good start to their education. Good teaching in both classes raises standards so that by the time children join the Year 1 class, most are achieving levels which are generally in line or close to what is expected nationally. The one exception is in the development in language and communication skills which remains below what is expected for pupils as they join the infant class. Teaching in all the areas of learning is consistently good. Children progress well through the measured stages of development and they thoroughly enjoy their well-planned activities. Teachers constantly check children's work which is analysed so that planning might target improvement accurately. The investment made to extend the indoor accommodation and improve facilities for outside play has been beneficial. There are attractive, secure areas with equipment to support physical and other areas of learning. However, the reception classroom is small and the reception class often takes up the resource area that is meant to be shared with Years 1 and 2. It is difficult to make direct comparisons with provision now and at the time of the previous inspection because expectations of what children should be offered and how activities will be organised have changed significantly since then. However, achievement has certainly improved well. One other significant improvement is in the deployment of teaching assistants. Their contributions are invaluable in adding to the good quality of learning. They are well trained and are fully involved in planning for the full range of experiences. Their skills are managed well through a strong partnership. The Foundation Stage is very well led and managed.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a very supportive environment to encourage learning.
- Relationships are exceptionally good.
- Children are confident and feel secure.
- Independence and decision making are promoted effectively.

Commentary

46. Relationships are exceptionally good and children thrive in a safe and secure environment. They flourish in an atmosphere in which their contributions are encouraged and valued. Children enjoy each other's company and are calm and settled. They sit and listen and sustain concentration well when working with an adult. Staff skilfully prompt and encourage children rather than doing things for them. Children develop independence as they make choices in the order in which they will work through the planned activities. They organise their belongings effectively, use equipment sensibly and tidy away resources when they have finished.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- On entry to the nursery, many children have weak communication skills.
- A good programme has been introduced to teach letter sounds.
- Speaking skills are constantly encouraged.

Commentary

47. Teachers use role play well to provide opportunities for children to develop their speaking and listening skills, whether in the 'Kitchen', the 'Chip Shop' or 'Bob the Builder's Yard'. Teaching values the need to provide children with good quality writing experiences and ensures that basic skills in literacy are purposefully taught from the start. Children realise that they can communicate through marks on the page and are eager to do so. They recognise words from nursery rhymes and read a range of familiar words. There have been good improvements in the teaching of early reading since the last inspection with a strong emphasis on identifying and articulating sounds within words. This provides children with a good grounding for the later work in Year 1. Just a minority of pupils will have attained the expected learning goals by the end of the reception year. Nevertheless, achievement is good and often very good.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are developing a good grasp of mathematical language and are progressing well.
- They count accurately and recognise some numerals.
- Children use their mathematical skills and knowledge in a range of problem-solving situations such as model making.
- Teaching is good.

Commentary

48. In the nursery children enjoy number activities when joining in singing games or laying the table for their lunch break. Many know simple shapes such as circles, squares and triangles. In the reception class, children look at numbers to 10, explore patterns in number, and investigate solid shapes such as cubes and spheres. Through their sand and water play, children explore capacity and volume. In pattern work, children work with symmetry and investigate different ways of fitting shapes together. All this work provides a solid grounding for future learning in mathematics. Many children will have achieved the expected learning goals before progressing to Year 1.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers plan a very wide range of topics to promote children's understanding of the world around them.
- Children achieve well and the majority attain the expected learning outcomes by the end of the reception class.
- There are many opportunities for children to ask questions and to investigate and explore.

Commentary

49. When they enter the nursery, some children have not developed the natural curiosity that is the basis for learning. Consequently, adults provide experiences that encourage children to ask questions, to compare and to contrast. They choose a stimulating range of resources and opportunities are grasped, wherever possible, to widen children's experiences. For example, during the 'teddy bears' picnic', teachers engaged children in a discussion about differences between brown, polar and panda bears. Visits are planned within the community to enhance learning; these include trips to the shopping areas or the park. Several visitors, including the fire and police services, are welcomed and add an extra dimension to pupils' experiences. Children use the computers on occasions, but not extensively, and this area could usefully be extended.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well and the majority attain the expected learning goals by the end of the reception year.
- Children have varied opportunities to use a wide range of tools, equipment and materials.
- The outside play area provides a good range of opportunities to develop physical skills.
- Teaching is good.

Commentary

50. Teachers have a good understanding of the need for physical activity and experiences are well planned into daily timetables. Both classes have a secure area where they drive their wheeled vehicles and work on large equipment to develop their physical skills by crawling through apparatus and climbing over and under. There is a very good range of resources which encourage children to find creative ways of moving. Children know that exercise is good for them and all use space safely and with good consideration for others. They have a good awareness of what constitutes a healthy diet and enjoy the fruit they receive at break times.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Planned activities allow children to communicate their feelings and use their imagination.
- Teaching is good. Children have varied opportunities to explore shape, texture, colour and form through a good range of media.
- Children know songs and rhymes from memory and have a good awareness of rhythm and mood.

Commentary

51. Children in both the nursery and reception classes join in singing rhymes and songs from memory; they move with a growing sense of rhythm. Even the youngest accompany their singing with actions. Their ability to interpret music creatively was well illustrated in a session led by the visiting music specialist where children moved expressively, interpreting the mood of the 'butterfly' or the 'rabbit'. Children choose from a range of paint, pastels, charcoal and crayons when drawing and painting and enjoy mixing colours and textures to create different effects. Teachers value their work which is attractively displayed to enhance the learning environment.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**, there are many strengths and some areas for development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement in speaking and listening and reading is good throughout school.
- Achievement in writing in Years 1 and 2 is good and satisfactory in Years 3 to 6.
- There have been very good improvements in the teaching of sounds within words in Years 1 and 2 since the last inspection.
- Teaching is good in Years 1 and 2.
- The teaching of reading and speaking and listening is good in Years 3 to 6 but there are some weaknesses in the teaching of writing.
- Teaching assistants make a good impact on learning.
- Pupils who have special educational needs, those who speak English as an additional language and the Traveller pupils are well supported and achieve well, relative to their starting points.

Commentary

52. Standards seen in lessons and completed work in Year 2 are broadly average. This is a good improvement since the previous inspection and on the results of the 2003 National Curriculum tests. There are two main reasons for this; firstly the teaching of letter sounds within the English language is now good and is having a positive impact on pupils' progress. Secondly, the assessment of pupils' skills in writing is good and the information is used well to plan the next steps and to set targets for future learning. Standards seen in Year 6 are average in speaking and listening and reading and pupils have achieved well in these two areas from the low starting point on entry to the nursery. Improvement since the previous inspection is good. In writing, attainment remains below average as it was for this group of pupils in Year 2. There have been some good improvements in provision. These include regular assessments and analysis of pupils' developing skills and the setting of targets for learning. Both measures have gone some way to tackling the problems of inconsistencies in the rate of learning that were evident in the past. They have not, however, been as successful as hoped because pupils' targets are sometimes too vague and the system sets the target for the end of Year 6 rather than indicating exactly what each pupil should be achieving by the end of each school year. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 receive good teaching in the essential skills of writing but do not have sufficient opportunities to practise and consolidate what they know, especially when recording work in other subjects.
53. There is a strong emphasis in Years 1 and 2 on teaching pupils to blend and segment letter sounds within words. This promotes good progress in reading in Years 1 and 2 and in spelling across the school. The development of writing skills has been a focus of school improvement over the last year and has led to better standards of work. When writing their stories, Year 2 pupils are developing their settings well and introducing some interesting characters. Capital letters and full stops are evident in most pupils' writing by the end of Year 2. Some very good standards were seen in Year 1 where several pupils are already working at above-average levels. Their writing is easy to read, they spell common words accurately and use their knowledge of letter sounds very effectively when attempting harder words. For example, one pupil wrote 'scyul' for school). Reading is good in Years 1 and 2 and most pupils can find information using contents and index pages and by scanning pictures, diagrams, sub-headings and text.
54. During one lesson, Year 6 pupils were developing a character portrait for their own writing, using some ideas from a novel they had read together. The lesson was very good and their

work showed a good analysis of the author's techniques and an ability to experiment with writing strategies to make their compositions more interesting. Examples of such good links between reading and writing are not common however. In the other year groups, pupils are often taught elements of writing well but are then set basic written exercises that do not allow them to apply their new knowledge. As a result, pupils do not have enough opportunities to orchestrate their skills through extended pieces of writing or to edit and refine their work. In the Year 6 tests for 2003 many pupils who gained a high Level 5 for reading, only managed a Level 3 for writing and six of these missed the expected Level 4 by one mark. With added time for consolidation and practice of writing skills, this level of attainment could be much improved. In Years 1 and 2 teachers ensure that there is a very strong link between reading and writing which provides a model for pupils' work and extends their experiences of fiction and non-fiction styles. Teachers, throughout the school, choose interesting books to study that interest both boys and girls.

55. The teaching assistants play an important part in supporting pupils in the classroom. They intervene sensitively in whole-class sessions so that all pupils can keep up with the pace of learning. One has received the recommended training and runs successful support programmes for pupils who need extra help. In Years 1 and 2 the assistant leads good guided reading sessions, introducing new vocabulary and prompting pupils to use all of their reading strategies when tackling new text. There is good support for all groups of pupils. Pupils who have special educational needs have focused sessions with a specialist teacher to improve their basic skills and their confidence. Those who speak English as an additional language benefit from the school's emphasis on oral skills and are able to take full advantage of lessons through the support they receive. Traveller pupils have sessions with an outside specialist and teachers keep a careful record of gaps in their learning so that they can be addressed.
56. The school does not have a consistent approach to the teaching of handwriting and, as a result, standards vary widely. As late as Year 6, some pupils are mixing joined writing with printed script and this is unsatisfactory.
57. Marking is a particularly strong feature in Year 1 with helpful comments that point out ways to improve. In Years 1 and 2, much evaluation is completed orally as pupils consider whether they have met their target for the lesson. This is a good way of encouraging younger pupils to take responsibility for their own learning. Some good examples of marking were seen in Years 3 to 6 but there were also occasions where comments were too general such as 'try to be neater'. Homework is used satisfactorily to extend work done in the classroom and is usually completed conscientiously.
58. Leadership is firmly focused on improvement and the subject manager has identified writing as a priority area for the year. She visits classes regularly and has a clear idea of the developments needed.
59. The library has a good amount of stock but some of the books are old and worn. Stocks are not catalogued appropriately and it is difficult to find the correct section. The subject manager is aware of this and has an action plan in place. There is a bank of computers within the library and this provides good opportunities for pupils to use electronic or printed sources when engaged in research.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

60. Reading skills are well applied across the curriculum and there are attractively displayed non-fiction books in all classes to serve the topics being studied. Speaking and listening skills are constantly extended during whole-class introductions or discussions. As a result, pupils are confident in expressing their views and in providing evidence to justify their opinions. Writing skills are well used to record work in Years 1 and 2 but less well used in Years 3 to 6. The subject manager has plans to incorporate writing assignments into topic plans to promote a good range of non-fiction work across each year group and this initiative is urgently needed.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In Years 1 and 2 teaching is good and in Years 3 to 6 teaching is sound with some good features.
- Pupils achieve well over their time at the school.
- Pupils develop a good facility with numbers in written work.
- Pupils are accurate in their mental calculations.
- Marking does not always follow the accepted scheme and pupils do not always know what they have to do to improve their own work.
- Opportunities to develop numeracy skills in other subjects are limited.

Commentary

61. The school has sought and obtained specialist help to support the drive for better provision and standards and this has been successful. Attainment seen in lessons and workbooks is average by Years 2 and 6. It has risen since the last inspection and good improvements have been made. Pupils now achieve well. The National Numeracy Strategy defines the pattern of mathematics lessons and teachers plan effectively to cover all aspects of the curriculum and make lessons interesting. In Years 1 to 2 where teaching is good, pupils are well managed and thoroughly engaged through an interesting range of activities and very good interventions. Teaching assistants are involved in the planning and delivery of lessons and effectively support pupils who need help. As a result, all ability groups make good progress. In Years 3 to 6 teaching has some very positive elements and consequently most pupils' results in mathematics are better than predictions based on their Year 2 scores. Objectives are clear, there is plenty of challenge in lessons and pupils work hard because they are well motivated. Teachers use games and competitions to speed up calculations and practise tables. There are times however, when teaching is too prescriptive and includes little choice in the methods used and when it comes to the format of recording work.
62. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 have a secure grounding in the methods of number calculation on paper, and work undertaken at the start of each lesson is intended to help the development of mental calculation. The slow pace of some of these opening sessions, however, means that they are not as successful as they should be and some mathematics sessions, designed for 60 minutes of energetic thinking, are stretched to fit a one hour and twenty minute period. In some cases, this slows down the rate of learning.
63. Leadership in the subject is sound and the work of the local authority's consultants has had a marked impact on provision and improvement. School-wide issues have been identified and addressed. These have included pupils' difficulties with two-step problem-solving processes and in using and applying their mathematical knowledge. Training has been provided and, as a result, teachers have improved subject knowledge. In addition, recent test results have been thoroughly analysed to inform teachers' future planning. This information is used to set targets for the end of Year 6 but not for each year group, and so has limited use for teachers in Years 3, 4 and 5. There is a clear marking code that pupils understand. Where it is used, it provides valuable feedback but sometimes vague comments or ticks do not help pupils to see what they have yet to do to reach their targets.

Mathematics across the curriculum

64. Numeracy is used to a satisfactory extent in other subjects but there is scope to extend this. In history, pupils have used a simple time-line to locate stories chronologically and a few pupils practised finding averages when learning about a spreadsheet in ICT. However, no evidence

was seen during the inspection of pupils using data handling skills in science or geography for example where pupils could use pictograms, pie charts and block graphs to present information.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- By Year 6, most pupils attain the knowledge, skills and understanding expected nationally.
- Good teaching leads to good levels of achievement.
- There is good support in lessons so that pupils are fully involved.
- Skills of scientific enquiry are not as well developed as pupils' knowledge and understanding of the subject.

Commentary

65. Standards seen in science are average in Year 2 and this is a good improvement on the findings of the previous inspection. At Year 6 attainment has been maintained at an average level. Achievement is good across school. Pupils' books show that they have good levels of scientific knowledge. For example older pupils explain about interdependence in nature, adaptation of species and can identify the necessary elements in the reproductive processes of plants. Younger pupils demonstrate an understanding of the way in which we get energy from food and are conversant with the important features of a healthy lifestyle.
66. Achievement is good because teaching is good. Teachers' knowledge and understanding is high, classes are well managed and behaviour is good. Pupils are keen to participate and offer sensible suggestions and theories as they discuss the scientific features of the phenomena being studied. Teachers are inventive in the ways they make their lessons interesting using materials and equipment from home and, on occasions, borrowed from the local high school.
67. The curriculum has improved recently, giving more attention to experimentation. Practical work seen during the inspection helped to generate enthusiasm for the subject. In one very enjoyable Year 2 lesson the pupils discussed how to control variables when investigating the friction produced by a toy car rolling across different surfaces. Year 4 pupils measured temperature at different intervals to determine the insulation provided by different materials and, in Year 6, pupils tried different ways to separate mixtures of sand, rice and salt. However, pupils are still more likely to be seen following the teacher's instructions for setting up and recording an investigation or experiment rather than asking their own questions and finding ways to answer them.
68. Leadership of the subject is sound. Teachers follow a useful scheme of work that covers all elements of the science curriculum in a balanced way. In lessons, the pupils are aware of the learning goals and they evaluate how far they have progressed. The monitoring of teaching and learning is in place and the subject manager has a sound overview of standards, largely through her specialist teaching in Years 3 to 6.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

Provision in information and communication technology ICT is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision has improved well in the investment in hardware and software, in the training of teachers and the introduction of a scheme of planning that provides good guidance for teachers.
- Standards are below average at the ends of both Year 2 and Year 6, and achievement is unsatisfactory.
- Computers are not used enough on a day to day basis, and pupils lack practice in using their ICT skills to support their learning in other subjects.

Commentary

69. The pupils in Year 2 have an inadequate range of ICT skills and experiences because they have limited opportunities to use computers. There is some evidence of pupils using word-processing facilities to write and present their work but little evidence of making graphs, of producing databases or using the local Intranet. In one lesson, pupils from the Year 2 class were given the opportunity to use a word processing program to write a book review. They were clearly unfamiliar with the layout of the keyboard, had to ask what to do at the end of a line and had no experience of using different fonts, effects or layouts. Some pupils remembered programming a floor robot in the past and said that they enjoyed the work. Records show that some pupils have used graphics programs to make patterns and pictures but, overall, attainment is below average for their age.
70. Year 6 pupils have moved beyond this stage but again are below the standard usually found for their age. They could not show any graphics, text or work with data that they had previously saved, and were not confident with e-mail, sensing and control programs. They had a basic knowledge of problem-solving simulations using ICT but had not created multi-media presentations. Work in pupils' exercise books showed very few examples using ICT for drafting, editing and presenting work for particular audiences, although there were some examples in wall displays. A few pupils know how to re-load programs and to use the full range of prompts available on the screen but many do not have the confidence to do this.
71. Very little teaching with, or about ICT, was seen during the inspection. Teaching is judged as unsatisfactory because so little time is spent teaching specific ICT skills or in allowing pupils to practise and consolidate what they have learned. For example, pupils in Year 3 had the exciting experience of sending an e-mail to a rugby player in Australia. However, the work was not extended by setting up further e-mail projects to enhance and extend skills.
72. The school has invested heavily in ICT equipment and now has three clusters of eight good quality computers. It is also well equipped with printers, scanners, a digital camera and two interactive whiteboards. The computers are very well located outside the classrooms for pupils in Years 3 to 6 and are ideally placed to provide constant and good access. Yet, during the inspection, their potential was not exploited fully. The teachers and teaching assistants have been fully trained, a comprehensive scheme of work is in place and the pupils are enthusiastic to learn. These good assets are not being used to best advantage for the benefit of the pupils' learning.
73. Management of the subject is sound. Policies, action plans, equipment and the technical aspects of how to teach the subject have all been put in place. Leadership, at all levels has not been successful in ensuring that pupils gain from the effective use of the equipment, facilities and the teachers' newly acquired skills. This should now be a priority and is a key issue of the inspection.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

74. During the inspection computers were occasionally seen to be used to support learning in other subjects but not in a way which enhanced or reinforced the acquisition of skills. In history, pupils in Year 3 brought up a website to research an archaeological dig and in design and technology some older pupils searched the internet for ideas. A mathematics program is used by pupils in all junior classes to practise number skills but this involves a very basic level of ICT skills. There is a lack of integration of ICT with work in other subjects, for example, to analyse data or to communicate with others. As a result, pupils do not see the application of ICT skills in the world at large.

HUMANITIES

History

The provision for history has improved since the last inspection and is now **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching of history is good.
- Historical enquiry is well developed.
- Speaking and listening and reading skills are used well to support learning.
- The use of computer technology, especially for research, is not well developed.

Commentary

75. Pupils attain in line with expectations at both Years 2 and 6. In the four lessons observed the teaching of history was consistently good. Teachers use a good range of strategies to make lessons interesting and historical enquiry is well developed. In Year 1 a very good range of artefacts had been collected so that pupils could investigate and share their experiences of household objects from the past. Speaking and listening skills were well promoted and pupils of all ages were eager to contribute to discussions and to suggest the intended function of some unusual items. In Year 2 pupils asked pertinent questions about 'toys from the past'. These included 'how did children know what was new when there was no television advertising?' and showed that pupils were contrasting features of the past and present. The lesson demonstrated pupils' well-developed skills of finding out information from different sources.
76. In Year 6 pupils used very good questioning techniques when interviewing characters from the 'war years'. Higher attaining pupils used a range of expressive vocabulary such as when they spoke about a 'shoe-box of a shelter'. In the Year 5 lesson on Tudor medicine pupils were engrossed in the subject. National guidelines ensure that the recommended programmes of study are followed. Pupils understand the legacies of Rome and Ancient Greece and have a secure sense of chronology when linking periods of history. There is little evidence of ICT being used to carry out individual research or of the use of computers to engage in simulations of the past.
77. Pupils are very well behaved and younger pupils collaborate well when investigating in groups. Their attitudes to learning are very good and they respond very well to challenge.
78. Planning is particularly good with tasks well matched to the pupils' abilities. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included and receive a good level of support, even though the availability of teaching assistants is limited for the teaching of history, especially in junior classes. History contributes well to pupils' cultural development.

Geography

The provision for geography remains **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attainment is in line with expectations and achievement is good over time.
- Pupils use a good range of sources for information, including maps, plans and photographs.
- Computer skills are not well developed through this subject.
- Pupils enjoy their lessons and are well behaved.

Commentary

79. Evidence was gathered by observing two lessons, talking to pupils and the subject manager, checking planning and pupils' completed work. Standards are judged to be in line with expectations and have been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils are introduced to mapping skills early on and they have a growing idea of places by making comparisons between the physical and human characteristics of their own locality and those further afield. They investigate physical features such as coastlines and consider the reasons for differences in the lifestyles of those living on a small, make-believe British island and St Lucia. Younger pupils understand and use vocabulary such as cliffs, beaches, and mountains. Experiences are linked well to pupils' understanding of how people influence and change the environment. Pupils in Year 2 survey recycling trends, and pupils in Year 6 investigate pollution in their river topic. Planning indicates that there is a secure coverage of the requirements of the National Curriculum and assessment procedures have improved since the last inspection.
80. In both lessons observed, a good range of teaching strategies were used to enable pupils to extend their speaking and listening skills. In the very good lesson in Year 2, pupils were challenged to devise questions in order to compile their survey and the teacher skilfully extended their use of vocabulary and phrasing. Writing and computer skills are underdeveloped in the subject and there is no evidence of the Internet being used to search for information.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

During the three day inspection, there were insufficient opportunities to see work in all elements of art and design, design and technology and physical education to make reliable, overall decisions about provision. A total of four lessons were seen in music.

Art and Design

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are some attractive displays of pupils' art work that celebrate achievements.
- A good scheme of work is in place to guide teachers' planning and ensure full coverage of all elements of the subject.
- Pupils have good opportunities to use a wide range of media.

Commentary

81. It is not possible to make an overall judgement of teaching because no lessons were seen. However, it is clear from displays and completed work that children reach expected standards in art and design by the end of Years 2 and 6, and that they achieve satisfactorily. Older pupils use sketchbooks well to explore and develop their ideas of representing movement in art.

Some completed 'action pictures' show that they have employed their skills of observation well. There is a good emphasis on studying a range of famous artists. Year 5 pupils successfully re-created features of Cezanne's work using pastels. In a good link with personal education, pupils in Year 3 produced pictures of people in different relationships. They had worked hard on facial and body expression so that the viewer is able to guess the connection, such as 'mother and child' or 'good friends'. This is good evidence of pupils expressing feelings through their art work.

82. There has been a satisfactory degree of improvement since the previous inspection and attainment has remained at the expected level. The scheme of work gives detailed guidance and support on the knowledge, skills and techniques that pupils need to know and indicates where art work may be used to enrich learning in other subjects. For example, in their science lessons pupils observe and record markings on insects or shells and explore pattern when studying 'Tudor Times'. There is, however, little use of ICT in the subject. Teachers make good use of the surrounding area to extend pupils' experiences. Classes visit a sculpture park, sketch countryside scenes and take advantage of exhibitions at the local Education Arts Centre. The subject is managed well; resources are adequate and provision is reviewed regularly as part of the schools' self-evaluation schedule.

Design and Technology

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are presented with an interesting range of projects.
- They have good attitudes to the subject.
- There are secure links between designing and making.
- Little use of writing was seen, for example, to produce instructions.

Commentary

83. Curriculum guidelines, long term planning, completed work and photographs of pupils' experiences indicate that attainment is in line with expectations and that pupils achieve well. In the one lesson observed in Year 3 the teaching was very good and pupils had brought ideas from home to add to those gained from the Internet. Pupils had clear learning objectives and applied successfully the skills taught in the previous lesson as they adapted the power of a balloon to supply 'pneumatics' to manoeuvre jaws, eyes, wings or teeth. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, were well supported in this lesson and the teaching assistant was deployed effectively to improve the quality of learning. Designs were discussed in groups and pupils were encouraged to add arrows to indicate movement, labels to indicate materials to be used and techniques to be applied. A teacher in training supported pupils well in using an Internet 'search engine' to investigate monsters. Pupils were delighted with their experiences and were so engrossed that there was disappointment when the lesson came to a close.
84. The subject is managed well, planning is monitored and there is a collection of photographs to illustrate satisfactory coverage of National Curriculum requirements including food technology, designing, evaluating and refining their products. The after-school craft club provides an enhancement for learning and allows pupils to develop their skills and interests. In the session seen, pupils were choosing specific materials for their projects, showing a good awareness of properties and how they could be joined together.

Music

Provision in music is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attainment is above expectations and achievement is very good.
- The pupils thoroughly enjoy their music lessons and make good progress.
- The school's musical performances are of a high quality and are commended by parents.

Commentary

85. The school benefits to a very good degree by the voluntary services of a music specialist who works alongside class teachers for two afternoons each week to provide exciting and fast-moving lessons. The quality of the teaching seen was good with some very good features. Lessons provide pupils with an interesting range of listening, composing, evaluating and performing experiences. Attainment by Years 2 and 6 is above expectations, as it was at the last inspection. Provision remains good and pupils achieve very well.
86. In Year 1 pupils invent symbols for conducting the orchestra. They follow accurately the commands to play louder or quieter. In some very challenging work, two groups played simultaneously, creating a good combination of sounds. Those in Year 2 worked at an advanced level to compose a high quality musical interpretation of 'a day at the seaside'. They developed their own pictorial notation to record the composition and evaluated their work thoughtfully. The final performance was of a very high standard and reflected their hard work over several weeks. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 develop their composition and performing skills further and are creative in using the variety of instruments available, together with everyday objects, to make the sounds they require. By Year 6 they have a good understanding of musical origins and talk confidently about the influences of African music on modern styles. Pupils have a secure understanding of musical terms such as 'ostinato, ternary and binary' and spot where and how these are used in the structure of the score. Working at above-average levels, they play their own part with good control and rhythm.
87. There is great excitement among pupils who eagerly await their music lessons and enjoy them to the full. The teachers and specialist musician set high expectations and all groups of pupils make good progress. Lessons promote essential skills and knowledge and also allow very good opportunities for creativity, exploration and improvisation. Musical experiences are extended by opportunities for pupils to sing in the choir and to represent the school in local festivals.

Physical Education

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have very good attitudes to the subject.
- They are well aware of how exercise can contribute to a healthy lifestyle and are building good habits in this respect.
- The school makes very good use of the community to enhance provision.
- There is good leadership for the subject.
- The wide range of sporting and physical activities offered is recognised through a national award.

Commentary

88. Two lessons in physical education were seen, one for games and one for gymnastics. In both cases teachers showed a good level of subject knowledge and managed their pupils well. Attainment is at least in line with the average and strengths were seen in the gymnastics work. There was good attention to safety and pupils were mindful of each other's space. The Year 5 games lesson in the hall was sound, and learning and achievement were satisfactory. Year 4 pupils went to the local Arena stadium and benefited from very good, specialist coaching in

gymnastics. They were presented with challenging activities using a wide range of equipment and this represents a good enhancement to learning.

89. Pupils were very excited during the lunch break before the coach arrived and talked enthusiastically about the work that they might do. This demonstrates very good attitudes to the subject. The number of trophies and cups on display pay testimony to the school's successes in local sporting competitions.
90. Records of planning and work show a good variety of lessons that cover all aspects of the subject, including swimming. The subject manager is very enthusiastic and provides good subject leadership. She organises and manages a very good range of after-school sport. This supports pupils' physical development very effectively as well as extending their experiences within the community and promoting their social experiences. An exciting range of outdoor and adventurous activities are arranged for those pupils who join the residential trips. Because of the wide range of activities on offer to pupils and the commitment to promoting physical exercise, the school has received the Activemark award.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Commentary

91. The school makes satisfactory provision for the teaching of personal and social and health education and citizenship. There are timetabled lessons for the subject and themes are well integrated into other subject areas such as science or religious education. Lessons cover aspects such as healthy eating and conservation issues. In food technology pupils learn and follow hygiene rules and know the importance of clean hands. As part of their religious education lessons, pupils study different religions and cultures to help them prepare for life in a multi-cultural society. In art and design pupils had drawn pictures of people, indicating the relationship between them. They had used some subtle techniques, such as facial expression and body position to indicate the possible links. The eco-school council members act as good citizens in representing the views of pupils in the running of the school and the caring school ethos is built on mutual respect.
92. There are satisfactory opportunities for pupils of all ages to take responsibility, to act as monitors and look after younger children. There are planned occasions, such as circle time, where pupils discuss social and moral issues, talk about feelings and consider dilemmas. The residential experience for the older pupils successfully extends their social skills and presents them with new challenges.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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