

## INSPECTION REPORT

### **ST MARIE'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Sheffield, South Yorkshire

LEA area: Sheffield

Unique reference number: 107113

Headteacher: Ms Alison Pickin

Lead inspector: Dr Calvin Pike

Dates of inspection: 01 – 04 March 2004

Inspection number: 260731

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:	4 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	273
School address:	Fulwood Road Sheffield South Yorkshire
Postcode:	S10 3DQ
Telephone number:	0114 2301904
Fax number:	0114 2303509
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr K Lally
Date of previous inspection:	12 October 1998

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

This is a larger than average Roman Catholic primary school on the outskirts of Sheffield. It serves five local parishes and six main primary schools but admits a small portion of pupils from all parts of the city. There are 273 pupils on roll and the school is a little smaller than at the time of the last inspection. Standards on entry to the school's reception class are just above the national averages. The school population is relatively stable but a relatively small number of children join and leave the school other than at the usual times. A small number of pupils speak English as an additional language, some of whom are at early stages of learning English. Just over a quarter of the pupils come from an ethnic minority background. Most of these are Black Caribbean or Black British African backgrounds. There are 58 pupils on the register of Special Educational Needs which is in line with the national average. These are a mixture of social, emotional and behavioural difficulties with moderate learning difficulties. Eight pupils have Statements of Special Educational Needs which is in line with the average nationally. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals is also in line with the national average.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
1565	C Pike	Lead inspector	Mathematics Music
19419	S Boyle	Lay inspector	
30691	K Yates	Team inspector	English Art and design Foundation stage Design and technology Physical education
28170	I Chearman	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Special education needs Geography History

The inspection contractor was:

Parkman Ltd in association with *PkR*  
35 Trewartha Park  
Weston-Super-Mare  
North Somerset  
BS23 2RT

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

This school is a **fairly effective** one overall and gives pupils a **satisfactory** education. Their learning is **satisfactory** as a result of the **satisfactory** teaching, and the school provides **satisfactory** value for money. Nevertheless it has weaknesses in its subject leadership and key stage management. The leadership of the headteacher is very good, that of most key staff is **unsatisfactory** even though they contribute well to the smooth running of the school on a day to day basis. The management by the headteacher is **very good** and the role of the governors is **satisfactory** with some good features.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The school's ethos is a positive one, enhanced by the extent of parent involvement in the school.
- There are good, productive relationships between pupils and teachers.
- Some teaching is of good quality in reception and both key stages, but there was only a very small amount of teaching that was very good.
- Pupils' standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are strong in KS2.
- The headteacher's vision and management is very good, bringing a clear and appropriate direction for the school's development.
- Middle management is underdeveloped, with particular weaknesses in monitoring achievement across subjects and key stages.
- The provision for the moral and spiritual development is very good which directly contributes to the positive relationships and the racial harmony that is evident.
- Assessment information is not used effectively enough to improve achievement or ensure the inclusion of all pupils. As a result there is insufficient challenge for different groups of pupils, especially the more able and those for whom English is an additional language.
- Punctuality of a minority of pupils to school is poor having a negative impact on attitudes to work.

Improvement since the last inspection is **unsatisfactory** overall, but there have been improvements in some areas especially in the last year. High standards have not been maintained although the improvement in standards attained at the age of 11 when pupils leave the school is broadly in line with the national trend over the period. A number of key issues in the last inspection have not been addressed. Standards at the age of 11 fluctuate between subjects from year to year. The quality of teaching, although satisfactory, has declined since the time of the last inspection. However, the newly appointed headteacher has made important changes and is addressing this decline.

### STANDARDS

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

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

The table above shows that in 2003 pupils' achievement in mathematics, English and in science was in line with the average compared to national averages for 11 year olds. Inspection evidence shows that pupils in the Foundation Stage are likely to achieve the goals expected by the end of the reception year in all of the areas of learning and some will exceed these levels. Attainment of the pupils is currently above average in reading but in line with national averages in writing and in

mathematics at the age of seven. As a result of cohort differences, standards of attainment at age 11 overall are higher than last year. Attainment in English, mathematics and science is broadly average at the age of eleven. Standards in ICT at the ages of seven are average but, at 11, are above average. Standards are in line with national expectations in other subjects sampled where a judgement is possible. Pupils achieve satisfactorily overall. Achievement in ICT is good in Key Stage 2. Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and others with English as an additional language achieve satisfactorily. However, more able pupils are not achieving well enough, especially in Key Stage 1.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION

Although the quality of education is **satisfactory** overall, there are also areas for improvement. The quality of teaching is **satisfactory** with some good teaching for different age groups, but teachers' planning does not challenge pupils consistently and too rarely encourages them to be independent in their learning. The quality of the curriculum is broadly **satisfactory** and pupils have good enrichment opportunities outside the classroom. Plans to support pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are linked **satisfactorily** to lesson plans, although this is stronger in Key Stage 2 than in Key Stage 1. Across the curriculum the use of ICT is **satisfactory** overall and it is good for older pupils. The care and support for pupils' is **good** but information to guide them in how to improve is unsatisfactory. Accommodation is satisfactory overall but some aspects of the building and site impede pupils' progress. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour as well as their personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are **good**. Attendance is **good** but punctuality is **unsatisfactory**.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The relatively new headteacher's leadership is very good but that of other key staff is unsatisfactory overall. Management by the headteacher is very good; her clear focus on the needs of pupils and on raising standards is communicated well to governors, staff and parents alike. By contrast, the management roles of other staff have been underdeveloped and are, therefore, unsatisfactory because too little attention is paid in ensuring standards are as high as possible across the school. This is partly related to four changes in the leadership of the school since the last inspection. Systems for identifying priorities for and evaluating the impact of the school's development plan are now more robust but the work of subject leaders is not sufficiently focused on monitoring standards and learning. The headteacher is aware of the need to develop and improve middle management and has begun to do so well. The governing body carries out its duties satisfactorily: governors have become much more aware of the strengths and weaknesses in the school over the last year and are constructively challenging in helping the school to improve.

## PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very satisfied with the school, particularly with the care and support provided. Pupils like the school – as highlighted in their responses to questionnaires and in discussions with them.

## IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- develop the role of middle managers who are subject coordinators and, particularly, key stage coordinators to secure rigour in monitoring standards, ensuring appropriate professional development to support this process;
- use assessment data and information about pupils to improve the overall planning of learning;
- improve day-to-day lesson planning to meet the needs of pupils across the full range of ability and make lessons fun;
- develop more independence in learning for pupils, making them aware of how to improve;
- strengthen provision for pupils for whom English is an additional language.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

Overall achievement of children of reception age is **satisfactory**. By the end of the year it is likely that the majority will reach the expected standards in all areas of learning and that some will exceed these levels. Attainment in the core subjects is **satisfactory** at the ages of seven and 11. Pupils achieve **satisfactorily** overall and the achievement of older pupils in ICT is **good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- In the 2003 national assessments pupils attainments were in line with national average in English, mathematics and science.
- Standards in the core subjects have varied in reading, writing and mathematics at the age of seven for several years, with a drop in attainment in reading and mathematics and improvement in writing.
- At the age of 11 standards have been above averages for some years but dropped in 2003.
- Standards in ICT are good by Year 6 and older pupils make good progress.
- The achievement of 11 year olds, compared to pupils in similar schools, has improved from 2002 in English but declined in mathematics and science.

#### Commentary

1. Children start in reception with standards which are just above the national average. The majority achieve the goals expected by the time they reach the end of the Foundation Stage. Some exceed these goals. They make satisfactory progress in all areas of learning. This is better than at the time of the last inspection. Attainment on entry to Year 1 is just above average.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	16.2 (16.7)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	14.5 (13.9)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	15.7 (16.2)	16.3 (16.5)

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

2. The table above indicates that, in 2003, the average score gained by seven year old pupils fell in reading and mathematics but improved in writing, at the same time as those nationally increased slightly in reading and writing and fell very slightly in mathematics. Since the last inspection, attainment at the age of seven has fluctuated; overall, boys' attainment in 2003 was just below average and that of girls has been in line with the national average. Although remaining broadly average at the age of seven, achievement in Years 1 and 2 has been only just satisfactory considering the attainment of pupils on entry to reception. The attainment of too few pupils is above the national average at the end of Year 2. This is partly related to the number of changes in leadership of the school but more particularly, because most subject managers have not focused enough on improving standards particularly for higher attaining pupils. Key judgements on attainment in the core subjects and ICT at the age of seven are set out in the following table.



## Key Stage 1

Subject	Judgement in previous report	2003 national assessments	Inspection judgements for current cohort	Comment
Reading	Above the national average with at least satisfactory progress showing satisfactory achievement.	Average with satisfactory achievement.	Average with satisfactory achievement.	Standards are lower than at the time of the last inspection and have varied between being in line and above averages in different years. During the same period standards rose year on year nationally.
Writing	Above the national average with good progress showing good achievement.	Average with satisfactory achievement.	Average with satisfactory achievement.	Standards dropped for some years after the last inspection but rose in 2003 to being in line with national averages.
Mathematics	Above the national average with good progress showing good achievement.	Below average. As pupils enter Year 1 at least average, this indicates unsatisfactory achievement.	Average standards but that of higher attainers is not consistently above average. Achievement is satisfactory.	Standards dropped after the last inspection and remained largely just below average until 2003 and currently when standards are in line with average.
Science	Above the national average with good progress showing good achievement.	N/A	Average with satisfactory achievement.	Standards have declined since the last inspection but the school's current focus is raising standards to average.
Information and communication technology	In line with the national average with satisfactory progress in both key stages.	N/A	Average with satisfactory achievement.	Standards are broadly average and skills are being extended across the curriculum.

- Standards of 11 year old pupils have been relatively high and mainly above the national averages since the last inspection. They dipped to being in line with the national averages in all core subjects in 2003, partly related to the range of prior attainment of the year group. Although standards have been high compared with those nationally, older pupils' achievements compared with those nationally, who attained similarly at the end of Year 2, have not been consistent. Pupils in Year 6 in 2003 achieved satisfactorily compared with other pupils who attained similarly as seven year olds nationally. Using similar prior attainment comparisons, this 2003 year group achieved better in English but not as well in mathematics and science as the previous year group. Variations, in subjects and between years, in pupils' attainment from Year 2 to 6 compared with that of others who obtained similar results in Year 2 are not significantly related to levels of attainment at the start of Year 3. Instead, they result from past weaknesses in the monitoring of standards by subject leaders and the overall co-ordination of the key stages. Overall the trend in results at the age of 11 is broadly in line with the national trend over the last five years.
- The school's records of attainment of different groups of pupils are not sufficiently detailed to provide assessment information that shows whether or not pupils of different abilities or

different backgrounds are doing as well, better or worse than others. There are relatively few black pupils in the school but a number of pupils for whom English is an additional language. In lessons observed, black pupils achieved as well as all other pupils. However, some pupils with English as an additional language were not always being supported effectively to make satisfactory progress in their subject learning. Pupils with SEN achieve at a satisfactory level against the appropriate targets set for them in their individual education plans.

5. The proportion of pupils that attained the higher Level 5 in English and mathematics in the 2003 national assessments was above average. However, this was below the proportion that attained similar standards in 2002. For the current cohort, a higher proportion of more able pupils are attaining levels that reflect their prior attainment, especially in mathematics. Some of the variation is associated with the different characteristics of the year groups involved, but it is also related to the school's use of assessment data to improve standards. Although this aspect of the school's work has not been dealt with consistently or well, the current leadership is now addressing weaknesses in this area.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.2 (28.8)	26.8 (27)
Mathematics	27.2 (29.3)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	28.8 (30.9)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 37 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

6. Standards declined in all core subjects in 2003 putting them in line with national averages after three years when they had been above these averages. Nationally available data makes clear that the 2003 cohort achieved satisfactorily compared with pupils with similar attainment in Year 2. However, although the change in test outcomes was related to the profile of the cohort, the extent to which the school used assessment information to track the achievement of pupils was too limited. As importantly, although the trend in attainment over the last five years was in line with that nationally, standards on intake have not varied greatly. Standards in relation to prior attainment at the end of Year 2 have, therefore, unnecessarily fluctuated and been teacher dependent because subject leaders and key stage co-ordinators have not been sufficiently rigorous in monitoring outcomes and progress through the school. This has been exacerbated because middle managers' roles have not been well enough developed to offset the effects of changes in leadership in the period since the last inspection. Achievement is satisfactory for the pupils in the current Year 6 in mathematics, English and science.
7. As religious education will be inspected by the Diocese under Section 23 of the Education Act, no judgements are made on this.
8. Pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are satisfactorily developed. Although they are not extended fully enough to support work across the school in Years 1 and 2, they are used well to enhance learning for older pupils particularly in Years 5 and 6. Pupils' ICT skills are developed well using the school's ICT suite and applied effectively in other subjects. This explains the improving standards in ICT across the school. The table below highlights the key judgements related to the core subjects of English, mathematics and science since the last inspection.

## Key Stage 2

Subject	Judgement in previous report	2003 national assessments	Inspection judgements for current cohort	Comment
English	Above the national average with strengths in writing and reading. Good progress overall but uneven through the school.	In line with national averages. Achievement is average when compared to those who attain similarly at the age of seven.	Average. This different cohort of pupils is achieving satisfactorily.	Decline in standards in the last year but cohort related. Achievement in relation to prior attainment in Year 2 varies between years.
Mathematics	Above the national average with good progress and pupils achieving well.	In line with national averages. Achievement is average when compared to those who attain similarly at the age of seven.	Average standards overall but some pupils working at higher levels. Satisfactory achievement.	As in English, a decline in standards. Achievement in relation to prior attainment is variable but some improvement in last four years.
Science	Above the national average with good progress and achievement.	In line with national averages. Achievement is average when compared to those who attain similarly at the age of seven.	Average. Most pupils achieve satisfactory but higher attaining pupils are not challenged enough.	Standards declined since last inspection and achievement in relation to prior Year 2 attainment also variable between year groups.
Information and communication technology	Broadly average with good skills in handling and communicating information. Satisfactory progress leading to standards in line with expectations.	N/A	Above average standards as pupils achieve well between Years 2 and 6.	Standards have improved since the last inspection. Judgements about achievement in relation to prior Year 2 attainment are not possible as national data is not available.

### Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

In reception children have **good** attitudes to learning and they behave well. Relationships between staff and children are **very good**. Elsewhere in the school pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **good**. Pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good**. Attendance is **good** but punctuality is **unsatisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attendance levels have improved but the number of pupils arriving late disrupts the start of the day.
- There are very good relationships between pupils.
- There is very good racial harmony.
- Spiritual development is very good.
- There is very good provision for moral development.

### Commentary

9. Attendance rates have risen steadily and are now above those of similar schools. The level of unauthorised absence is slightly above that nationally. However, an important issue is punctuality because a significant number of pupils arrive at school as the bell goes or just after. The impact of this is felt in registration periods that are unnecessarily disrupted.

Pupils who are consistently late are not developing good work or time-keeping habits. Whilst some pupils are late because they depend on their parents to bring them to school, others use the school bus and are late through no fault of their own. The school is very concerned about the late arrivals of both groups of pupils, and is doing all that it can to improve punctuality.

**Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)**

Authorised absence	
School data	3.9
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.6
National data	0.4

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

10. Pupils like school, and enjoy the range of activities that it offers. These positive attitudes come from their parents' positive views, and because pupils feel well supported in school. The good attitudes mean that pupils are mostly willing to work, even in lessons that are not as interesting or do not involve pupils as well as they might. Sometimes, pupils are inattentive and do not concentrate well. This mostly occurs when lessons or assemblies fail to keep their interest because the pace is too slow, or the activity does not engage them.
11. Pupils' behaviour has improved and is now good. This is the result of raised and consistent expectations for how pupils should behave. In lessons, behaviour is mostly good and contributes to the learning. Sometimes behaviour is unsatisfactory in Years 1 and 2 when teachers' expectations are too low or not clear. Exclusion is used in very extreme cases and only very rarely. Its use is entirely appropriate.

**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	144	1	0
White – Irish	1	0	0
White – any other White background	15	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	13	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	13	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	13	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	4	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	5	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	6	0	0
Black or Black British – African	10	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	7	0	0
Any other ethnic group	1	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	17	0	0

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

12. Pupils are friendly and polite. They play and work together well. A good example of this occurred in the infant playground when one boy asked another to stop hanging on his hood.

The second boy complied. What was impressive was that this was done extremely politely and amicably so that neither boy felt upset or aggrieved. Pupils with SEN are confident because they are included well by teachers and by the very good support of the teaching assistants. However where a teaching assistant is not present they sometimes do not achieve as well. They have mostly good attitudes to learning in this secure environment.

13. Staff are good role models for pupils in how to relate to others, and this supports the very good relationships. Pupils from different ethnic backgrounds all work and play together well. Incidents of bullying are extremely rare, and dealt with well. There is occasional name calling, but most often it is innocent and not meant to hurt or offend. The school promotes these very good relationships - an aspect of spiritual development - through its valuing approach to pupils. This raises pupils' self esteem, and enables them to be equally valuing of other pupils. Of particular note was the way in which Year 6 pupils, used a spiritual idea that they had experienced, and created a maze, that depicted their experiences at St Marie's, and their feelings, as they prepared for transfer to the high school.
14. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Pupils are quite clear about the difference between right and wrong encouraged by the school rules, which are used effectively to remind pupils about appropriate behaviour. Pupils are supported sensitively, and given effective opportunities to reflect on their behaviour, and think how they might have behaved differently. Provision for social development through clubs and residential visits is effective, but there is scope to extend this to enable pupils to make more of a contribution to the life and work of the school. Pupils have opportunities for visits and visitors to enhance their cultural experiences. The school makes use of opportunities offered by the city, and a good example is the theatre club's forthcoming production at The Merlin Theatre. Provision for multicultural education is mainly through religious education, and so is fairly limited.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL.

Overall quality of education is **satisfactory**.

### Teaching and learning

Overall learning is **satisfactory** as a consequence of **satisfactory** teaching. The use of assessment is **unsatisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Relationships between pupils and teachers are good, enhancing the school's ethos.
- Teachers' expectations of pupils' behaviour are not consistently high in Years 1 and 2.
- There is insufficient day-to-day assessment and feedback for pupils and too little use is made of available assessment information.
- Pupils engage well in their work but this is too often directed by the teacher.
- There is some good teaching throughout the school but this quality is more consistent for older pupils.

### Commentary

#### **Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 42 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	4 (10%)	23 (55%)	12 (28%)	3 (7%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

15. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, although examples of good and some very good teaching were observed during the inspection. The judgement results from an examination of pupils' work and teachers' planning for lessons over a period. This examination showed that pupils are not consistently provided with challenges that match their individual needs across the school. A particular reason for this is that assessment information is not used effectively to enhance learning. Linked with this issue, pupils are not encouraged regularly enough to become independent learners.
16. In the Foundation Stage, the quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory with some good features. Children achieve satisfactorily overall. This is an improvement from the last inspection. Teachers place a strong emphasis on children's personal, social and emotional development. This helps to ensure good behaviour through quickly learned routines and encourages children to co-operate well, taking more responsibility as they grow in confidence. All this is supported by the very good relationships between children, teachers and other adults who assist in classes. Teaching staff most often have sufficiently high expectations of children in their learning. However, some opportunities are missed to improve standards because assessment information is not always used systematically to ensure challenge is high enough or the pace of work is sufficiently demanding.
17. Teaching in Key Stages 1 and 2 is satisfactory. In Years 1 and 2, nearly half the teaching observed was good but there was also some unsatisfactory teaching. By contrast in Years 3 to 6, teaching was mainly good and, in some lessons, it was very good - but there was also some unsatisfactory teaching. It is the unevenness in the quality of teaching across the school that prevents consistently good learning: it was highlighted by a number of key characteristics identified below.
18. Although relationships between teachers and pupils support learning throughout the school, good teaching was highlighted by high expectations of pupils' behaviour - more consistently evident in Key Stage 2 than in Key Stage 1. Where teachers were confident in their subject knowledge, they were able to enthuse pupils about their work and also encourage a high pace of learning, such as in using ICT. However, in many lessons and in the additional work reviewed, learning was not as good as it could have been because teachers did not use the school's data concerning pupils' prior attainment to set sufficiently challenging work, especially for higher attaining pupils. In addition, too few opportunities were taken to assess pupils' progress so as to be aware of their improving standards. Consequently, challenge was sometimes too low and the pace of learning slow even in lessons where other characteristics of learning made them satisfactory overall.
19. The unsatisfactory use of assessment information also has a negative impact on the quality of planning for lessons. Most teachers' plans show different challenges for broad bands of pupils of different levels of prior attainment. However, because teachers' assessments are insufficiently linked to National Curriculum levels, not enough up-to-date information about pupils' attainment is known to enable teachers to ensure individual pupils' needs are met in all subjects. This situation is exacerbated in areas of the curriculum - such as in design and technology - which have only recently been reviewed to ensure progression and continuity of learning from one year to the next. In these cases, pupils have sometimes repeated work in different year groups and the pace of their progress has been too slow.
20. Linked to these issues concerning lesson planning, teachers have more recently adopted a lesson planning structure that includes three parts but relatively little time is spent in reviewing learning in the third section of a lesson. This prevents teachers from knowing how well pupils have understood in order to plan sufficiently demanding work in their next lesson. A key cause of this weakness lies in the limited range of teaching and learning methods used overall: teachers have too few opportunities to assess pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding during the course of lessons because learning is dominated by the teacher. Whilst classrooms are set out for pupils to sit together **in** groups, insufficient work is set for them to work collaboratively **as** groups. As a result, teachers have too little time to identify

strengths and weaknesses in pupils' learning and pupils have too few opportunities to become independent as learners.

21. An imbalance in the range of teaching methods used, combined with weaknesses in the organisation of some group work when it occurs, means that pupils do not have enough chances to learn from each other or use subject language to reinforce their understanding of ideas and review their own work. Additionally, although pupils are given encouraging feedback in lessons and when their work is marked, it is not sufficiently evaluative. Therefore, pupils have only a limited understanding of how to improve.
22. The quality of teaching for pupils with SEN is satisfactory. Teachers and teaching assistants plan together so that these pupils are included well in lessons. Some teachers provide work that is carefully matched to pupils' needs to ensure they are included well, but this is not consistent in all classes. In all other ways pupils are fully involved in all aspects of lessons. Progress towards well defined and appropriate learning or behaviour targets is closely monitored by the SEN coordinator who leads a well trained team of teaching assistants to provide effective learning in classrooms, and for groups withdrawn from classes. There are too few teaching assistants to enable teachers to meet pupils' needs at a better level. Where there are behavioural problems and no teaching assistant present, the learning of all pupils is sometimes slowed. There are relatively few pupils for whom English is an additional language. They make satisfactory progress in their learning overall but in some subjects the challenges provided do not match the needs of the pupils well enough for them to progress consistently. This is partly because no additional support is available for them in classrooms but also because staff understanding of the needs of such pupils is limited.

## The curriculum

The curriculum for reception children is **satisfactory**. Overall the school provides a **satisfactory** curriculum with **good** extra-curricular opportunities for enrichment.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Planning and provision for the reception-aged children have improved.
- Day-to-day planning to ensure pupils make satisfactory progress lacks detail.
- There are good opportunities for pupils to participate in a range of activities that enrich the curriculum.
- Support for pupils who have English as an additional language is inadequate.
- Accommodation is satisfactory overall but some areas of accommodation and resources impede progress.
- Good links are forged with schools to which pupils transfer.

## Commentary

23. Planning and provision for children of reception age has improved and ensures all areas of learning are fully covered. Good emphasis is now given to learning through a practical approach. The curriculum is satisfactory at Key Stages 1 and 2. However, whilst broad and balanced overall, some subjects are not planned in sufficient detail to ensure that there is progression in learning. Pupils' skills in using number and written language are developed satisfactorily across the curriculum, whereas their skills in using ICT are developed well.
24. Day-to-day planning to ensure pupils make appropriate progress lacks detail. Since her arrival the headteacher has improved the structure of long-term planning which now identifies suitable units of work for all pupils, many of whom are taught in mixed age classes. But, teachers' day-to-day planning is often too vague and imprecise to ensure all groups of pupils make sufficient progress. Opportunities to link learning across different curriculum subjects are rarely planned for. However, good curriculum links are forged with schools to which pupils transfer. Participation in modules of work that bridge primary and secondary

phases, including visits to the neighbouring Notre Dame school, facilitate the smooth transition of pupils to the next stage of their education.

25. A good range of opportunities enhances the curriculum. There is a high level of participation in a good range of lunchtime and after school clubs, which supports pupils' learning of sports, music, arts and crafts well. These are applauded and much appreciated by parents who support the school well. Educational visits and visitors widen pupils' horizons and makes learning interesting and relevant. Residential trips to Thornbridge where pupils from Years 5 and 6 undertake adventurous activities and study different localities also promote the development of their social skills well. The Italian Consulate teaches Italian to junior pupils. Few opportunities are provided for younger pupils.
26. Pupils with SEN have full access to the National Curriculum. Individual education plans target their learning in literacy and numeracy at a level appropriate to their needs. Pupils clearly know their targets for learning and share them with adults. The learning centre and resources are of good quality; they are well-organised and used effectively. The use of ICT to challenge pupils' further is underdeveloped but a start has been made with some new software. Pupils with statements receive their full entitlement and make sound progress. Although there is a register of gifted and talented pupils, the planning for very able pupils in lessons is not challenging enough, except in ICT for older pupils. The school as yet is unable to offer wheel-chair access to areas of the building used by older pupils. Support for pupils who have English as an additional language is inadequate. Current provision is inadequate as staff have yet to be trained to enable these pupils to receive the support they require and assist their development. The level of support assistants in the school is low overall.
27. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory overall but some areas of both impede progress. Despite recent improvements to two classrooms, some rooms are still very cramped and limit the space available for practical activities. The school grounds are attractive and include a wooded area, which offers very good opportunities to study nature and wildlife. Current provision for the library is unsatisfactory and new facilities alongside the well-equipped ICT suite are shortly to be installed. The school has identified, the provision of suitable wheelchair access for disabled pupils as requiring urgent attention. The grassed area is too small for pupils to engage in team games such as football and limits their opportunities to develop physical skills.

### Care, guidance and support

The care, welfare and health and safety for pupils are **good**. Provision for support, advice and guidance based on monitoring is **good**, but information to help pupils know how to improve is unsatisfactory. The involvement of pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views are **satisfactory** overall.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The ethos is very caring.
- Pastoral support for pupils is a strength.
- Advice and guidance for pupils is not based on sufficiently rigorous monitoring of pupils' academic progress.
- There are no formal mechanisms for seeking pupils' views.
- Pupils have limited knowledge of their learning.

### Commentary

28. Staff are very caring, and concerned for the welfare, health and safety of pupils. This caring concern is not only in the way staff manage pupils, but extends to giving those pupils who have not had breakfast, something to eat when they arrive at school. There is a good



emphasis on health and safety, with appropriate risk assessment. There is a planned programme for first-aid training, which is well underway, and will mean that eventually, all staff will have some form of training. The pupils using the school buses are supervised carefully. The school effectively uses the expertise of the school nurse when developing health related policies. It has adopted the latest guidance for child protection, although it is some time now since all staff had training. Nearly all pupils say there is someone they could go to with a worry.

29. There is too little for pupils to do in the playground. Older pupils can play sport and there are some lunchtime clubs, although these do not all run everyday. There are no areas for those children who prefer to sit quietly.
30. Many staff have been at the school for a long time and know the families and children well, and are able to give good support. The school monitors behaviour and concerns well, and uses outside agencies to support pupils effectively, by for example, getting help for pupils with behaviour difficulties. Pupils have limited knowledge about, and responsibility for their learning. Some of the older pupils know their learning targets, but often the targets are too broad to be helpful. The advice and guidance given to pupils, about learning, is not always based on informed monitoring.
31. Support for the few pupils who have English as an additional language has not been established. This is because staff have still to undertake the necessary training. This means that support for these pupils, with their learning, is at the present time unsatisfactory.
32. Pupils are listened to and their ideas valued, but there are no formal procedures for seeking pupils' views or enabling them to have a voice in the life and work of the school.
33. Induction for pupils coming into school other than at the usual time is what might be expected.

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

Links with parents, the community and other schools are **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents are very positive in their views of the school.
- Very many parents help in school.
- Links with the main feeder school are effective.
- Arrangements for consulting with parents are underdeveloped.
- There is not sufficient information to enable parents to support learning at home effectively.

### **Commentary**

34. The school is very welcoming and open, and parents say they feel comfortable approaching the school. As evidence of this, parents come into school at the start of the day, very many parents help in school, for visits and with extra-curricular activities. This helps inform the parents' very positive views of the school. The home school association is very active, with an emphasis on social, as well as fund raising activities.
35. The school's links with the community are developing well. Of particular note is the joint project that has involved the university, a local environmental group, business, parents, pupils and staff. These various groups have come together, and begun the process of developing the school's wood, to enable it to be used as an outdoor classroom. Parish links are being developed well, taking into account where pupils live.

36. Links with parents help involve parents in their children's learning but these are currently underdeveloped. Some classes send regular newsletters to parents about the work children will be doing. The school recognises the need to give parents more information about the curriculum of the sort that would enable them to help their children with work at home. Although the school listens to parents, it does not regularly consult them about what they would like for the school. Parents are involved well in reviewing targets set for pupils with SEN and the school's contacts enable parents to support their children learning at home.
37. Links with local colleges and schools are well established, with students coming from a number of different establishments for work placements, or as part of training programmes. Pupils meet and work with children from other schools, by competing against them and performing alongside them, at sporting venues and performances. The school is developing a link with an international school. The link with the adjacent high school has been developed well, to ensure effective transfer of pupils, and to make use of the specialist expertise of staff from there.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall quality of leadership and management are **satisfactory**. Leadership and management of the headteacher are **very good** but that of other key staff is **unsatisfactory** overall. The governance of the school is **satisfactory** with some good features.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The relatively new headteacher leads and manages the school very well.
- Middle management is unsatisfactory; most subject leaders and key stage coordinators are insufficiently rigorous in monitoring pupils' progress and raising standards.
- Performance Management strategies have been introduced well but the continuing professional development of all staff has been unsatisfactory leaving middle management underdeveloped.
- A good start has been made in considering ways of remodelling the school to improve learning.
- Governors have developed good knowledge of many of the school's strengths and weaknesses and provide satisfactory challenge to hold it to account.

### Commentary

38. Since 1998, there have been two acting and three substantive headteachers, of whom the current headteacher is the last. These changes of leadership have meant that the development of middle managers has been insufficient, especially in relation to monitoring provision and pupil progress to continue to raise standards. Consequently, the school's leadership and management have not made sufficient or consistent progress over the period since the last inspection but effective changes are being implemented to remedy this situation.
39. The current headteacher leads the school very well, sharing her high aspirations for the school and its development with staff, governors and parents alike. Although in post for only a year, the headteacher has refined the school development planning process to involve all staff and governors more actively; changed some organisational aspects of the curriculum and the school's systems to improve planning and reduce wasted time; continued to improve the curriculum links with the local secondary school; taken key steps to avoid substantial budget deficits; made some improvements in accommodation; and, refined roles and responsibilities of key staff. Strategic planning now reflects the school's goals well. The change process has highlighted many important areas for improvement and been managed very effectively. Staff and governors have been consulted and involved fully throughout. Notwithstanding anxieties that have resulted, a potentially effective team is developing.

40. During the most recent period without a substantive headteacher, key stage coordinators took leading roles in managing the school. They were successful in ensuring that the day-to-day management of the school operated smoothly and that the school's positive ethos was maintained, building on mutually respectful relationships between pupils, staff and other adults supporting learning. However, during the same period and for some time previously, the roles of key stage coordinators and subject leaders were underdeveloped. As a result, too few subject leaders have sufficient understanding of the progress made by different groups of pupils in subjects, and key stage coordinators are not well enough aware of pupils' developments across subjects and between key stages. Middle management is therefore unsatisfactory. This is because most subject leaders and key stage coordinators are insufficiently rigorous in monitoring progress to raise standards.
41. The special educational needs co-ordinator's leadership of special educational needs (SEN) is good and the management of this aspect of the school's work is satisfactory. However, the SEN coordinator has limited time to monitor the teaching and learning of pupils with SEN or identify areas for improvement. The school's contacts with external agencies are used effectively to access scarce resources and expertise. The funding and grant income is effectively managed to ensure for best value for money. Individual educational plans are carefully prepared and monitored as pupils move through the stages of learning. The line management of teaching assistants by the key stage co-ordinators creates effective partnerships with teachers to plan pupils' learning.
42. Performance Management strategies have been introduced well. Requirements are met and the school uses the system consistently for all teachers. The outcomes of performance management are intended to help inform the school's self-evaluation process. However, this is at an early stage of development. As yet, only a limited amount of data concerning pupils' achievements over time is available. Although used by the current headteacher to highlight areas for school improvement, it is not incorporated well enough into the work of middle managers in monitoring the effectiveness of practice across the school. Similarly, performance management is not well enough developed to ensure a right match between whole-school planning and the continuing professional development of all staff. Recent national initiatives to remodel schools so as to enhance pupils' learning have been followed well: a number of administrative tasks previously undertaken by teachers are now addressed by other staff; a relatively large number of adults other than teachers support learning in the classroom; and, a valuable service level agreement has been arranged with the local secondary school so that the expertise of a technician supports teachers in using and improving the ICT work in the school.
43. Budget planning has been improved and is closely linked to the priorities of the school development plan. Governors have a good understanding of the budget setting and planning process and ensure procedures are followed well. Financial regulations are addressed effectively and clear procedures are in place to enable governors to have a regular overview of expenditure across the year. Overall costs are average. Best value principles are followed in all matters of expenditure though not as fully as necessary in comparing the performance of pupils within the school or, from one year to the next, with others outside it. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	597,861.42
Total expenditure	620,259.83
Expenditure per pupil	2,278.51

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	24,225.78
Balance carried forward to the next	6,552.37

44. Governors are supportive of the school and bring valuable expertise to their roles. As the school has moved through different stages of leadership, governors have not always been

able to access comprehensive information concerning the school's development. However, especially since the appointment of the current headteacher, they have developed good knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They ensure the school fulfils its statutory requirements satisfactorily with the exception of some aspects of work related to the performance of pupils for whom English is an additional language. Governors are linked to different subject areas and to the work of pupils with SEN throughout the school. Through these links and reports from the headteacher and some subject leaders, governors are helped to know of the school's developments. Representatives of the governing body attend training regularly to support their understanding of this work. More recently, they have recognised the need to receive more detailed information concerning the progress of different groups of pupils as well as the achievements of year groups as they pass through the school. Their increasing awareness of the school strengths and weaknesses enable them to provide more effective challenge in raising standards than in the past. As a result, the governance of the school overall is satisfactory.

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

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

Provision for children in reception is **satisfactory**. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection.

45. There are 40 children of reception age. Thirty of these children are taught in a class for reception children only. The remainder are taught alongside 20 Year 1 children. The arrangement works well as all teachers responsible for reception children ensure that an appropriate curriculum is provided. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to children's learning. Improvements have been made to the reception classroom and the spacious outdoor area where teachers set up many exciting activities, which stimulate learning. On entry to school the attainment of the majority of children is just above the expected level. By the end of the year it is likely that most children will reach the expected standards in all areas of learning and that some will exceed these levels.
46. Overall teaching and learning are satisfactory. Achievement overall is satisfactory. Although assessment is carried out informally, it is not yet sufficiently systematic to inform day-to-day planning and provide teachers with a clear focus as to how small steps in learning are to be made so that the pace of learning might increase. Management and leadership of the Foundation Stage are satisfactory and there are good induction procedures for children starting school.

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

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

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

- Adults and children enjoy very good relationships.
- Attitudes and behaviour are good.

#### **Commentary**

47. Teaching and learning are good and the achievement of the children is good. The very good relationships and teamwork of the staff ensure that all children are provided with a warm and caring environment where they settle quickly and engage enthusiastically in the activities set. While a significant number of less mature children still require considerable assistance with dressing and undressing, more able children are competent at pouring out their own drinks and spontaneously wipe up any spillages their peers make. Most children display good attitudes to learning and are well behaved. They cooperate well in joint activities, share resources sensibly and the more confident children tackle activities independently. The school values parents as partners in children's education and most parents support children well both with homework and as helpers in the class.

### **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

#### **Commentary**

48. Teaching and learning are satisfactory as is achievement. The more able children are particularly articulate for their age and hold mature conversations, which contain detailed descriptions "A ghost is a scary creature who lives in a haunted house". In small groups,

adults sensibly give lower attaining children time to organise and clarify their thought as they sequence activities of 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears' by using pictures. On occasions staff do not model handwriting clearly in order for children to learn how to form letters correctly, nor do they insist that children adopt the correct posture for writing exercises. When discussing their reading books, higher attaining children understand the term 'synopsis' and lower attaining children show interest in illustrations.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Grouping of children enables them to achieve well.

### **Commentary**

49. Teaching and learning are good. The grouping of children according to ability for these sessions enables them all to achieve well and children are well on course to reach the expected levels by the end of the year. Activities planned have an increasing degree of challenge and learning becomes more exciting. Higher attaining children confidently use developing mathematical skills to solve practical problems and classify objects from the lightest to the heaviest. Children who have only recently started in reception and those who are at an early stage of mathematical development are provided with a variety of sorting and matching activities where learning is fun.

## **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of how pupils learn to use ICT.

### **Commentary**

50. Good use is made of the ICT suite when the support from the teacher, two parents and a teaching assistant enable children to achieve well in ICT. Higher attaining children identify the initial letter of words and select images by using 'drag and drop'. They have fun rotating them. Lower attaining children place images in the fish tank and write their name with guidance. In the mixed age class for older reception children the teacher uses rich language such as 'spikey leaved pineapple' to encourage children to use descriptive words as they use their senses and carefully examine fruit for similarities and differences. Teaching and learning are good and children achieve well.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory** and has improved since the time of the previous inspection.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good links are made with other areas of learning.

## Commentary

51. Teaching and learning are satisfactory as is the achievement of the children. Teachers plan carefully for purpose in outdoor activities as in hopscotch where number is reinforced. Most children have good physical skills and demonstrate these as they control their movements well when manoeuvring wheeled vehicles in the spacious outdoor area. In a taped movement lesson taken in the hall the teacher does not insist that children listen carefully and so time is lost as children are unable to hear the instructions they are required to respond to. Children are provided with satisfactory opportunities to handle tools and malleable materials and do so with confidence.

## CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good use is made of role-play.

## Commentary

52. Teaching, learning and achievement are satisfactory. Role-play areas stimulate and encourage children to develop new language, social and mathematical skills through play in the 'vet's surgery'. Children learn to observe carefully and confidently paint owls and butterflies to depict the differences between night-time and day-time creatures.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

### ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have declined.
- Attainment in reading is good.
- Where there is good and very good teaching pupils' achievement is greater.
- Leadership of the subject is underdeveloped.
- The library area is unsatisfactory.

## Commentary

53. Standards have declined since the previous inspection. By the end of Years 2 and 6, standards are in line with expectations. For most pupils, including those with SEN and those who speak English as their second language, overall achievement is satisfactory.
54. Most children enter the school with good speaking skills. They are keen to engage in discussions, in whole-class situations, and in small groups when given the opportunity. Teachers do not always insist on pupils developing good listening skills. This was also a concern of the previous inspection. Attainment in reading is good but it is satisfactory in writing. In guided reading sessions teachers and assistants use the opportunity afforded by working in small groups to question pupils and to check their comprehension of story content and punctuation effectively. These techniques together with the enthusiasm for reading which most children display help to keep these standards up.
55. Overall teaching and learning are satisfactory. There are occasions when it is much better. In a Year 4 lesson, where teaching and learning were very good, pupils achieved very well.

This was because the lesson was very thoroughly planned and delivered at a brisk pace. The introduction was lively and immediately engaged pupils' interests, as the teacher stirred up pictures in their minds as to how ideas for poetry writing might arise. Good links were made to history and geography, for example, *'King John's Jewels, lost in the Wash'*. Searching questions and detailed explanations of new vocabulary – 'doubloons' (old coins) from a Spanish wreck ensure all pupils listened intently as their imagination is fired to produce poetry of their own based on the structure of a poem which has been read to *them* *'Let me find ...'*. In this lesson there is a very good balance of teacher input and pupil involvement and pupils collaborate very well. Pupils of all abilities are able to succeed at their own pace and at the end of the lesson they confidently share their writing with others, for example,

*'Let me find .....  
A quill,  
An ink bottle  
And an old woman's will.'*

56. In lessons where teaching is satisfactory and in one unsatisfactory lesson, the pace of learning is often slow, the content of the lessons is unexciting and there is insufficient engagement of pupils. In these lessons pupils are less enthused to learn, and do not listen so well.
57. The library provision is unsatisfactory. The school has already identified this and plans are in place for new facilities to be installed alongside the well-equipped ICT suite and will enhance pupils' learning and provide good opportunities for research projects.
58. Leadership of the subject is underdeveloped. Professional development, monitoring of teaching and learning, and the opportunity to work alongside colleagues to identify and demonstrate the most effective teaching strategies are at an early stage of development. There is no consistent and rigorous approach to the ongoing assessment of pupils' progress in order for teachers to modify day-to-day planning to provide greater challenge in learning opportunities for higher attaining pupils. Analysis of test results so that staff may adjust their planning to ensure greater coverage of the weaker areas identified and to provide higher challenge for more able pupils is only just beginning.

### Language and literacy across the curriculum

59. Written work in other subjects makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' achievement, for example, pupils give clear definitions of the processes of photosynthesis in science and in geography they record details of life in St Lucia.

### MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are achieving as well as those in similar schools but achievement between year groups is not consistent.
- Although the mathematics curriculum meets statutory requirements some aspects of provision fail to provide enough challenge for the full range of pupils' needs.
- Teaching observed was satisfactory overall and much of it was good in Key Stage 2, but work in books shows that teachers do not use a wide enough range of teaching methods.
- Evaluation and monitoring of the school's mathematics provision is **unsatisfactory** and insufficient use is made of assessment information to ensure consistently good learning.



## Commentary

60. Attainment in mathematics has declined since the last inspection. In recent national tests, standards were below national averages at the end of Year 2 but in line with them at the end of Year 6. Given that pupils enter the school with standards that are at least in line with expectations, this means that pupils made unsatisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2. Their achievement between Years 2 and 6 was in line with that of other pupils who had similar results as nationally at the end of their Year 2. Boys out-performed girls in attaining higher levels at the end of Year 2, but standards were more equal between them at the end of Year 6. Levels of achievement by pupils between Years 2 and 6 have fluctuated from year to year. These variations of achievement have continued, in part, because there is insufficient monitoring of provision in mathematics to ensure that pupils make as much progress as possible across the school.
61. During the inspection standards in books in Year 2 were below expectations overall but some observations, especially of higher attainers, indicated that they are working towards being in line with averages by the end of Year 2. Differences between boys and girls were not noticeable in higher groups but concentration levels of a number of boys were more limited, partly because they were insufficiently involved in practical activities that motivated them. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 used number with growing confidence and many were developing good skills in measurement but they were less able to apply their understanding in pairs or groups as this work did not establish expectations strongly enough for them to work together collaboratively. Consequently, although achievement is satisfactory overall, there are insufficient challenges for higher attaining pupils. Pupils with SEN achieve satisfactorily when supported in lessons. Those pupils in the school for whom English is an additional language do not always achieve as well as they might firstly because teachers do not always have a full understanding of their needs and secondly because there is too little individual support for them within classrooms.
62. In Years 3 to 6 standards observed in observations and through work scrutiny are in line with expectations and with national averages in Year 6. Higher attaining pupils in Year 6 show standards above the national average. The improvements observed are due to the arrangements of groups for mathematics in Year 5 and 6 that are more effective than those in Years 1 and 2. Differences in girls' and boys' attainment are less noticeable, partly because group work encourages better sharing of ideas. Pupils' number skills are good but opportunities for pupils to share ideas, concepts and to apply their mathematical understanding is still too limited to make good progress in this area of learning.
63. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall but there is some very good teaching especially in Year 6. In Years 1 and 2, teaching is satisfactory whilst in Years 3 to 6 it is mainly good. The more consistently good teaching in Key Stage 2 enables older pupils to make better progress overall. The strengths of teaching that support good learning include the way teachers use their good subject knowledge to explain concepts and new skills. In the best sessions teachers used a range of questions which challenged the full range of abilities, ensured all pupils were included in learning and used pupils' answers to assess and support individual pupil understanding. However, the pace in learning is sometimes held up even in good lessons as the range of teaching methods is too limited. Opportunities for pupils to be challenged more effectively by working in pairs or groups at tasks that met their particular needs are lost. Instead, some learning is too much directed by and dependent on the teacher. Teachers' plans for mathematics outlined clearly what is to be taught with different tasks to meet three broad ranges of ability. However, these do not sufficiently well distinguish what is to be learned by different groups of pupils with the result that some more able pupils and some for whom English is an additional language are not fully engaged.
64. The mathematics curriculum is satisfactory. It meets National Curriculum requirements overall but the development plan is insufficiently targeted at current pupils' and staff needs. Number work dominates to the expense of other aspects of provision. In particular, pupils are not having enough opportunities to work cooperatively to use and apply the skills,

knowledge and understanding they have gained. Linked to this are two further issues: insufficient use is made of assessment data to identify pupils' developing needs; and although homework generally extends learning in the classroom, it is not set regularly enough and the feedback and marking of it is not consistent in helping pupils to improve. Limited reference to National Curriculum levels in planning, day-to-day assessment and in helping pupils to know how to improve means that progress in learning is sometimes too slow because pupils are not well enough challenged. Although the subject leader is supportive of her colleagues, monitors resources carefully and has visited all classes to observe learning in the last year, there is too little reference to National Curriculum levels in planning work or in recording achievement. As a result, the key role in improving standards is underdeveloped and weak; the leadership of the subject overall is unsatisfactory.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

65. Mathematics, and number work in particular, supports learning in many areas of the curriculum. There were good examples of use in science and some aspects of history and geography. Pupils also applied their understanding of number effectively when using ICT, in their art work and when making articles they had designed.

### **SCIENCE**

The provision for science is **satisfactory**.

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

- The quality of scientific enquiry skills for older pupils has improved.
- There is some good teaching in Years 5 and 6.
- Pupils are interested and enthusiastic about the work.
- Pupils are not clear about the standards they achieve and what they need to do to improve further.
- Older pupils have good opportunities to use ICT skills.

#### **Commentary**

66. Pupils' test results at age 11 in 2003 were in line with national averages. The attainment of seven year olds is in line with the average nationally. This represents a decline in standards since the last inspection. However, in the last year the school has made efforts to halt this decline. This is because the school, through assessment led by the coordinator, identified improvement in investigative skills as a priority and put this in place for older pupils.
67. Most pupils achieve satisfactorily except high attaining pupils whose achievement is unsatisfactory because they are not challenged consistently enough. Both older and younger pupils have satisfactory knowledge, understanding and skills in the subject overall. Their knowledge of life processes is good but that of physical processes and materials is weak. The oldest pupils show a secure understanding of the principles of a fair test.
68. Teaching is satisfactory overall and good in Years 5 and 6. Learning is planned to cover the curriculum and build skills systematically. In Years 5 and 6, questioning is used well to develop scientific vocabulary and challenge pupils' thinking. Pupils' good attitudes and behaviour are evident in the careful, accurate writing, diagrams and drawings they do. Older pupils have good opportunities to use ICT skills to tabulate, present graphically or analyse data from their investigations. Teachers' marking of pupils' work is positive but rarely identifies the next steps in learning. In discussion, pupils are not sure about what they do well or what they need to do to improve further. Planning provides satisfactorily for less capable pupils and those with SEN. Pupils at an early stage in acquiring English language are coping well despite limited support. Teachers' planning does not challenge fully the most capable pupils. The best planning for these pupils is seen in Years 5 and 6 but

opportunities for collaborative scientific investigations that they organise for themselves, are not yet in place.

69. The subject coordinator gives satisfactory leadership. Teachers are now well supported with planning, and resources that provide consistency of approach that enriches the curriculum for all pupils. A national scheme of work has been introduced that ensures that pupils progress logically to the next steps in learning. This has yet to be exploited fully by improved marking of pupils' work. However, management of the subject is unsatisfactory because the coordinator has not yet had the opportunity to monitor teaching and learning to build on her good assessment. Consequently the school does not have sufficient awareness of strengths and weaknesses on which to base future planning for improved practices. Strategies are not yet in place to share targets for learning with pupils so that they can know how to improve. In discussion pupils show that they are not sure about what they do well or what they need to do to improve further.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in ICT is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards and provision have improved since the last inspection.
- Teaching is good overall and strongest in Years 5 and 6.
- The leadership of the subject is good, but management is satisfactory.
- Opportunities for pupils with SEN are limited.

### **Commentary**

70. Pupils' attainment at age 11 is good, and at age seven is satisfactory. Pupils' attainment has improved since the last inspection. Most achieve well except for pupils with SEN whose progress is held back as a result of limited access to supporting computer software.
71. Older pupils show above average attainment in their use of spreadsheets, formulae and data handling when they format graphs and tables accompanied by Internet images into Word. Pupils have good levels of independence in using the Internet and creating presentations using Power Point, demonstrating their good abilities in manipulating sound, text, images and procedures. Some of these procedures use database skills acquired in Years 3 and 4. Similarly they use web sites and e-mail with confidence because of earlier learning.
72. The teaching seen was good overall and strongest in Years 5 and 6. The learning is structured to be challenging for all groups of pupils in the ICT suite and their achievement is good. Support assistants plan carefully with teachers and learning is matched to pupils' needs. Pupils usually show their enthusiasm and good attitudes in sharing the computers and in helping each other in learning. Some teachers use the electronic whiteboard confidently to excite pupils' interest and demonstrate skills. Others show that they need more training in using this very good resource. In two unsatisfactory lessons teachers did not challenge pupils sufficiently, the pace of the lessons was slow and the management of a minority of badly behaved pupils was not good enough. In the best lessons seen, pupils are given good opportunities to evaluate their own learning.
73. Leadership of the subject is good. Through training provided by the coordinator most teachers are now confident in teaching the subject. The curriculum is organised well including effective planning that ensures pupils learn skills in a logical and consistent framework. Strong links with the Notre Dame, the local secondary school, enable pupils to have good experience in control technology when secondary teachers work with them. The subject coordinator's expertise in leading induction processes for ICT for other feeder schools and for the Sheffield e-Learning Strategy helps to enrich the school's curriculum.

However, management of ICT is unsatisfactory overall as the co-ordinator does not have opportunity to monitor teaching and this limits her effectiveness in helping weaker teachers to improve planning and skills. Lack of networking of computers outside the computer suite reduces provision and access to targeted software for pupils with SEN. This inhibits the progress pupils with SEN make.

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

74. ICT is used well to develop literacy skills in English and satisfactorily across the rest of the curriculum. Data handling is used effectively in the humanities and science. The use of the electronic whiteboard for whole-class group teaching in science in Years 5 and 6 is a significant aid to learning in most classes. There is insufficient use of ICT to help pupils with SEN or those for whom English as an additional language reach their learning targets. Whilst helping in class parents effectively support pupils using computers.

### **HUMANITIES**

75. **History** and **geography** were not the main focus of this inspection. It is therefore, not possible to give overall judgements about provision in these subjects across the school. Pupils from different groups and of different capabilities were seen to have equal opportunities to learn and achieve satisfactorily.
76. In **history** no teaching was seen in classes but pupils' completed work was sampled, and learning discussed with the pupils. This evidence indicates that standards in Years 3 to 6 and in Years 1 and 2 are broadly average.
77. Pupils have a sound range of learning that covers the basic requirements of the National Curriculum. This encourages pupils to build historical skills in using sources of evidence to undertake historical enquiry. They learn about famous people in the past such as Florence Nightingale. By the time pupils are 11 they have built on these earlier experiences so that they have a sound sense of chronology, and of different historical periods. This helps them to understand how ordinary people's lives were different from today, how famous people influenced events, and the effects on their local area. For example, when they learn about the Great Plague when they visit Eyam.
78. In **geography** the pupils' work was sampled and pupils talked about their learning. Standards are broadly average but less secure than for history. This was evident in discussions with Year 6 pupils of a range of abilities. They were unsure of World geographical knowledge and physical features of the British Isles. Coverage varies between year groups and classes, against the requirements of the newly adopted national scheme of work. In Year 2 pupils learn about their local environment by finding places on maps and recognise simple features. They discuss weather in different environments and its effects on people's lives. However there was very little work to be seen. Older pupils build on this experience and have satisfactory skills in evaluating the wider world through enquiry and using sources of evidence. They can compare and contrast different environments and their effects on human settlement. They examine issues in the environment and have a sound understanding of Man's effect on the planet. Their mapping skills are satisfactory and they are able to match aerial photographs of local features on a map.
79. These subjects are under pressure from the drive to raise standards in mathematics and English, and have a lower priority. This is evident in the better quality of work seen in Years 3 and 4 where the pressure is least.
80. The coordinator for both these subjects is newly in place. The headteacher has guided her to improve leadership by producing clear planning so that all pupils have access to all areas expected by the National Curriculum, and ensure the necessary resources are in place to move these subjects forward. This planning is not yet fully in place. Years 3 and 4 and

Years 5 and 6 were seen to study the same topics in history, often using the same worksheets. Some pupils confirm that in the past they have relearned material.

81. Subject management of these subjects is unsatisfactory. There is because there has been no monitoring of teaching and learning that, with assessment information, inform staff of the priority actions that will improve standards. Senior management has not yet identified clearly the scope these subjects have for consolidation of basic skills in English and mathematics to raise their profile. Opportunity for pupils to write at length in different contexts is not consistent across classes in these subjects. Although there is some good practice seen, the work is frequently focused around worksheets and this further reduces opportunities. Information and communication technology is used well by older pupils. For example, when they use spreadsheets to tabulate weather and rainfall patterns to compare the climates in Sheffield and St Lucia.
82. Coverage and quality varies between classes, as does the quality of marking. Although teachers' marking is regular and encouraging it does not often lead pupils to understand the next steps in learning or how well they are doing. Information and communication technology is used well in both subjects by older pupils.

### **CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS**

83. Only one lesson was seen in art and design. No lessons were observed in design and technology and physical education. Therefore, it is not possible to give an overall judgement on provision in any of these subjects. In art and design, and design and technology, discussions with pupils and samples of their work show they have satisfactory opportunities to use a range of media and to study the work of famous artists. In some classes teachers take time and care to display pupils' work, which enhances the school environment. In physical education, the school provides a good range of sporting activities - football, rugby, badminton and cross country clubs - to encourage participation in sport. In addition, there is an outdoor pursuits residential visit for Years 5 and 6. These opportunities contribute well to pupils' personal development. In all of the above subjects, the coordinators do not have time to check on standards in their subjects and gain an overview of provision in the school.

### **MUSIC**

Provision for music is **satisfactory**.

- A very good range of extra-curricular activities enriches pupils' musical experience.
- The quality of teaching observed was good.
- Planning for the curriculum and the use of assessment are unsatisfactory, as is subject leadership of this area of the curriculum.

### **Commentary**

84. Standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 are just in line with expectations. By the end of Year 2 pupils can sing with confidence, perform repeated rhythms and have an understanding of basic rhythmic notation. However, pupils are not encouraged enough to use the language of music as required by the National Curriculum in order for them to be able to develop skills in appraising their work and that of others. Year 6 pupils are confident in performing, their singing quality being good. They are aware of different forms of notation and use them in composing and presenting their work. By this age, many pupils also use musical language with confidence and can describe music's pulse, rhythm and timbre as well as changing dynamics. In both key stages, pupils' achievement is satisfactory and this is greatly supported by the wide range of extra-curricular activities in which the school involves them; the peripatetic teachers that give some pupils individual lessons in school; and, the impact of the relatively large number of pupils across the school who receive instrumental lessons.

85. There were very few opportunities to observe teaching of music during the inspection. Nonetheless, these combined with evidence of pupils' previous work and discussions with older pupils confirmed that the quality of teaching and the learning are satisfactory. Strengths in teaching are related to the skills and enthusiasm of some but not all teachers in the school. Pupils' singing in whole-school assembly, for example, was enhanced by one teacher's confident singing and guitar playing. In Year 1 music lessons, the teacher's skills in organising the class in different groupings enabled pupils to develop a good understanding of reading notation and then to produce short compositions in groups that they performed with enthusiasm from a basic musical. Similarly, pupils in Year 6 could perform their work on notation well and were able to criticise aspects of performance effectively as the teacher used her confidence and continuing studies in music well to help pupils make good progress. However, there are also weaknesses in the teaching of music. These stem in part from the quality of planning of the music provision overall. Although a number of useful published schemes support teachers in preparing their lessons, the continuity of learning in music has not been planned across the school or with necessary attention to the needs of pupils with different prior experiences or levels of attainment. The school is aware that this has remained a priority for development for some time. In addition, assessment in music is weak and there is insufficient evaluation of how well pupils achieve or how to help them make good progress from one year to the next. Although the subject leader supports staff in developing their confidence to teach music and has enabled many pupils to enjoy the experience of performance within and outside the school, the lack of monitoring of pupils' work to improve standards means that leadership of the subject is unsatisfactory overall.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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