

## INSPECTION REPORT

**ST CUTHBERT'S ROMAN CATHOLIC VOLUNTARY  
AIDED PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Sunderland, Tyne and Wear

LEA area: Sunderland

Unique reference number: 108838

Head teacher: Mr M Gallagher

Lead inspector: Mrs B Hudson

Dates of inspection: 12<sup>th</sup> - 14<sup>th</sup> January 2004

Inspection number: 262962

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 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	301
School address:	Grindon Lane Sunderland Tyne and Wear
Postcode:	SR4 8HP
Telephone number:	0191 5536080
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Father G Ryan
Date of previous inspection:	21 <sup>st</sup> May 2001

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is a larger than average Voluntary Aided Roman Catholic primary and nursery school serving three parishes in the centre of Sunderland. There are 301 pupils on roll. Eighty-six of these children attend the nursery or reception classes. Most parents and carers are in employment and the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is broadly in line with the national average. Overall, children's attainment on entry to the school is average. A few pupils are from minority ethnic groups, and none speak English as an additional language. Around 16 per cent of pupils have special educational needs, mostly moderate learning and social, emotional and behavioural problems. Four per cent of the pupils with special educational needs have a statement of these needs. The school has recently gained an Achievement Award for improved performance in the national tests.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
28772	Mrs B Hudson	Lead inspector	English English as an additional language
11468	Mrs J Menes	Lay inspector	
20006	Mrs J Sheraton Wright	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Art Design and technology Music Physical education
21458	Mr P Smith	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology History Geography
1575	Mr M Tones	Team inspector	Science Special educational needs

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# PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

## OVERALL EVALUATION

This is an effective school where the good leadership, management, teaching and learning help pupils to achieve above average standards in the national tests. Parents are very satisfied with what the school does for their children. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- Pupils achieve well and standards by the end of Year 6 are above average in English, mathematics and science.
- The good teaching enables pupils to learn quickly.
- The marking of pupils' work and the setting of targets are not consistently used by all teachers to help pupils to improve their work.
- The school is well led and effectively managed.
- The leadership of art, design and technology, geography, history and music is unsatisfactory.
- The effective provision for pupils with special educational needs ensures that they make good progress.
- Pupils behave very well and their attitudes to their work are very good.
- Outdoor play opportunities are unsatisfactory for the nursery and reception children.

This school has made good progress since the 2002 inspection when HMI agreed that the school no longer required special measures. It has made very good progress since the 2001 inspection when the school was placed in special measures. Teaching is now more effective. Standards have improved in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT). Pupils are receiving a much broader and relevant curriculum and the school's recently introduced enrichment afternoon is providing pupils with good learning opportunities.

## STANDARDS ACHIEVED

### Year 6 results

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

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

*E\* - the school's results were within the bottom five per cent of similar schools in the country  
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

Current standards broadly reflect the standards outlined in the above table. Children in the nursery and reception classes achieve satisfactorily and most attain the goals children are expected to reach by the end of reception. In Years 1 and 2 pupils make good progress and by the end of Year 2 standards are above average in reading and writing and average in mathematics. Pupils make good progress in Year 3 to 6 and by the end of Year 6 standards are above average in English, mathematics and science. This is **good achievement** given their average standards on entry. Standards in all other subjects are average except in design and technology where they are below average and in physical education where they are above average.

The pupils' personal development is promoted well. Overall, pupils' **spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good**, resulting in very good behaviour, attitudes to work and respect for other people's feelings. Satisfactory attendance and good punctuality ensure that pupils make good use of their time at school.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**Overall the quality of education is good** and is characterised by **good teaching** and learning. The good teaching in the nursery ensures children settle quickly into school, develop their confidence and make good progress in their speaking and listening skills and personal and social development. Elsewhere, the good and very good teaching in English, mathematics and physical education enables pupils to achieve well in these subjects. The methods for finding out how well pupils are doing in English and mathematics are good. Overall teaching in the other subjects is satisfactory and this, along with the less rigorous tracking of pupils' progress, contributes to the satisfactory standards that pupils achieve.

The school provides pupils with many opportunities to experience a worthwhile range of curriculum activities. There are strengths in English, mathematics and physical education. All pupils are included in a wide range of enrichment activities.

Pupils are well cared for; however, in some classes they are not well informed as to how they can improve their work. There is a good partnership with parents and the community.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**The leadership and management are good.** The head teacher leads well, expecting staff and pupils to strive to achieve high standards. This is why the school has made very good progress over the last two years. Good management ensures the school runs smoothly. Governance is **good** due to the support of an effective governing body. They fulfil their statutory duties effectively.

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

**Parents' views are very positive.** They are particularly pleased with the standards pupils achieve, the quality of teaching and the good leadership. **Pupils enjoy coming to school.** They feel they have to work hard and find out new things in lessons. They also feel that the adults working in the school will help them if they get stuck or become worried.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Ensure all teachers effectively use marking of pupils' work and the setting of targets to help pupils know how to improve.
- Improve the leadership in art, design and technology, geography, history and music to help teachers to improve the standards pupils achieve in these subjects.
- Improve the quality of outdoor provision for the nursery and reception classes and increase the opportunities for children to access this to extend their learning.



## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

Overall, pupils of all abilities achieve well in English, mathematics, science and physical education. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in all other subjects except in design and technology where achievement is below average. Most children in nursery and reception achieve the goals that they are expected to reach by the end of reception. In Years 1 to 6 they achieve well and attain standards in English, mathematics and science that are above average.

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

- Pupils achieve above average standards in English, mathematics, science and physical education by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils of all abilities, including the higher attaining and those who have special educational needs, achieve well.
- The school's focused approach to improving standards in English, mathematics and science is having a positive impact on the standards pupils achieve.
- Standards in design and technology are unsatisfactory.

#### **Commentary**

##### **Foundation Stage**

1. Most children enter the nursery class with average levels of attainment in most areas of learning, although the full range of ability is represented. Attainment on entry is below average in personal, social and emotional development and in speaking and listening. Good teaching, which is focused on developing pupils' personal, social and emotional development and speaking and listening skills, helps children make good progress in these areas. In all other areas, they make at least satisfactory progress. As a result, most children achieve the goals that they are expected to reach by the end of the reception year.

##### **Key Stage 1**

2. The analysis of pupils' national test results in 2003 shows that, when compared with all schools nationally, standards by the end of Year 2 were average in reading and writing and below average in mathematics. When compared with schools with a similar number of free school meals, standards in reading and writing remain average but in mathematics they are well below average. For the pupils in this year group this represents good achievement in reading and writing and satisfactory achievement in mathematics when compared with these pupils' below average attainment on entry to the nursery. The school's analysis of the 2003 national tests indicates that more work on solving simple problems in mathematics needs to be done. This is now being done and standards in the present Year 2 are now average for mathematics. The school has addressed this weakness in the present Year 3 by providing these pupils with additional support for their mathematics. In 2003 boys achieved slightly better than girls in reading, writing and mathematics. Over the past two years, although standards have remained broadly average there has been a downward trend. The school's analysis and the one completed during the inspection confirm the school's view that there are more average and less able pupils in these classes and overall the pupils made at least satisfactory progress from their assessments in the nursery and reception classes. Inspection findings show that standards in reading and writing are now above average and in mathematics they are average, which is an improvement on last year. Boys and girls are achieving similarly and at a slightly

better rate than their nursery and reception assessments would suggest. This is also supported by the school's information gathered from tracking pupils' progress.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	15.7 (15.8)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	14.8 (14.4)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	15.5 (16.5)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 44 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

### **Key Stage 2**

- The analysis of pupils' national test results in 2003 shows that standards in Year 6 have improved significantly since 2001 and at a higher rate than that found nationally. This shows the very good impact of the school's commitment to raise standards. Since 2001, Year 6 pupils' results improved from well below average in English, mathematics and science to average in English, well above average in mathematics and above average in science. Parents are very pleased with the standards attained by their children.
- Results in the 2003 national tests for pupils in Year 6 in comparison with all schools and those who attained similarly at the end of Year 2, showed that standards were average in English, above average in science and well above average in mathematics. In 2003 boys achieved better than girls in mathematics but in English and science girls achieved better than boys. The last three years' average for boys and for girls indicates variations year on year but overall there is very little difference.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.0 (26.8)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	29.1 (26.4)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	29.5 (28.1)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 43 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

- The head teacher and subject leaders for English, mathematics and science have focused on improving standards for all pupils through the rigorous use of assessment data to identify strengths and weaknesses and to raise the expectations and expertise of all staff. This is having a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning and the standards pupils achieve in English, mathematics and science.
- Higher attaining pupils and children with special educational needs make good progress throughout the school because of the additional support and appropriately challenging work. Pupils from minority ethnic groups achieve as well as other pupils. Teachers include all pupils in lessons and ensure work is suitably matched to pupils' needs.
- There are strengths in the achievement of pupils in physical education throughout the school due to the high quality input from qualified coaches bought in by the school. In information and communication technology (ICT) standards are now satisfactory and this is an improvement on the last inspection. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in art, music, history and geography but underachieve in design and technology where standards are below those expected nationally. Pupils could achieve better in these subjects when a more rigorous approach to improving teacher's subject knowledge and evaluating standards and the quality of teaching in these

subjects is introduced. The head teacher is developing the teachers' subject leader responsibilities so that these subjects can be fully monitored and evaluated to raise standards further.

## Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal qualities are **very good**. Their behaviour is **very good** and is well supported by all members of the school community.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Relationships are very good. Pupils show well-developed personal qualities and behave very well.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to their work and enjoy coming to school to learn.
- There are very good opportunities for spiritual, moral and social development in all areas of school life.

### Commentary

8. Very good relationships develop in a friendly environment created by all the staff. Pupils are polite and friendly when talking to one another and are often seen to work together effectively. Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour which pupils respect and respond to in a positive way. Behaviour is very good both in lessons and when moving around the school. There have been no recent exclusions.

### *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	299	2	0
Mixed – White and Asian	2	0	0

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

9. Older pupils accept responsibility for younger pupils. Good provision is made for pupils' personal development with staff providing activities that support and challenge pupils' thinking in a safe and secure learning environment. Pupils are very enthusiastic about the newly formed School Council and take their responsibilities very conscientiously.
10. Spiritual, moral and social development is good. It is fostered through the strong belief in pupils' wellbeing and opportunities in collective worship, resulting in the pupils' eagerness to learn. Cultural development has improved since the last inspection and is now satisfactory. Pupils learn of life in their own community and are able to compare this to other cultures both here and abroad, for example in China and Africa. Pupils take part in visits to places of religious, cultural and historical interest. Visiting theatre companies are used to promote the performing arts; pupils also take part in school performances. They are encouraged to listen to and appreciate a variety of music from other countries, times and places. The pupils learn about others' religions and beliefs. Pupils in Year 1 and 2, for example, took part in a 'Passover' meal when learning about Judaism.

11. Attendance is satisfactory and punctuality is good.

**Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 94.7%**

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.8	School data	0.4
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

12. Pupils feel proud of their school. In their responses to the questionnaires, pupils feel that teachers listen to their ideas and treat them fairly. Parents in discussions with inspectors and from their responses to the questionnaires are very satisfied with the way teachers encourage pupils to become responsible. They are enthusiastic about the 'pupil of the week' award system and see that as a way that all pupils are encouraged to do their best in all aspects of school life.

**QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

Overall, the quality of education is good, characterised by good teaching, good learning opportunities, very good care and support for pupils and very good links with parents.

**Teaching and learning**

The quality of teaching and learning is **good**. Teaching is better in English and mathematics than in the other subjects and this has contributed positively to the improved standards in these subjects. The marking of pupils' work and the setting of targets are not well used by all teachers to help pupils improve their work.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching in English and mathematics is good. Physical education lessons taken by the professional coaches bought in by the school are very good.
- Most teachers have high expectations of pupils' work, particularly in English, mathematics and science, and of their behaviour.
- Most teachers use pupils' contributions to discussions and their answers to questions well, to support their learning.
- Marking of pupils' work and the setting of targets is not used consistently well by all teachers to help pupils know how to improve their work.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well because of the effective contribution by teaching assistants and the very good teaching in Years 5 and 6.
- In a tiny minority of unsatisfactory lessons too much time is spent on organising pupils and the activities, which results in pupils learning very little.

**Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 48 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	7 (15%)	20 (42%)	19 (40%)	2 (4%)	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.*

13. The quality of teaching and learning is good. This is an improvement since the last inspection, and shows the benefit of the substantial training, the regular evaluations of teachers' work and the clear guidance the teachers have received on how to improve their practice. Parents agree that this is an important strength of the school's provision, with 99 per cent of them indicating in the questionnaire that teaching was either good or very good. Pupils also have great respect for their teachers as indicated in their questionnaires and from their very positive comments received during the inspection.
14. Overall, the quality of teaching in the nursery and reception classes is good, which ensures that children become confident and are able to learn new skills quickly. Overall teaching in the nursery is good because the children are encouraged to use their skills in all areas of learning and they are encouraged to make their own decisions about how to complete an activity. In the reception classes teaching and learning are always satisfactory and occasionally good. In the reception classes on too many occasions adults do the things that children can do for themselves, for example writing the child's name on work rather than expecting the child, who can write their name, to do it. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together to provide stimulating activities for the children to enjoy, except in the outside play area where the resources and the amount of time available for the children to use in the area is unsatisfactory. Staff use their very good knowledge of the children's capabilities to plan and deliver suitable work. Staff are very good at developing children's speaking and listening skills and this helps the children to make good progress in reading, writing and number work. There is a good balance between activities that are directed by the adults and those where children can choose what to do and develop their independence.
15. Throughout the rest of the school, the teaching in English and mathematics is good. Teachers are confident with the national strategies and pupils develop good reading, writing and mathematical skills. The teaching of physical education by specialist coaches is very good and provides pupils with many opportunities to develop their physical skills and to take part in team games. In other subjects, teaching ranges from good to unsatisfactory, with most of the teaching being satisfactory. This is reflected in the satisfactory standards pupils achieve in these subjects. In the small amount of unsatisfactory teaching too much time was spent on organising pupils and the activities, which resulted in pupils learning very little.
16. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils' behaviour and pupils respond well to the praise and support that they receive in most classes. Most pupils are very enthusiastic about their lessons and see them as opportunities to learn something new. The very good behaviour allows teachers and pupils to make the most of their time in class and this helps pupils to progress.
17. Teachers are good at asking questions and expect a full response from pupils by providing them with time to think before they answer. They also make good use of their answers to questions and their contributions to discussions to support their learning. In a good Year 1 science lesson, the teacher and teaching assistant used a practical approach for pupils to explore materials and objects. The lesson required pupils not only to answer adults' questions but they also had to set their own questions and answer them. It is the ability of the adults to provide the time and not to interject with their own ideas that really helps the pupils to make good progress.
18. The quality of teaching and learning for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Most teachers are skilled at preparing materials at the correct level for the pupils to complete, and match work closely to their individual targets. These targets are appropriate and provide guidance to pupils and the skilled teaching assistants. The co-ordinator for pupils with special educational needs works closely with staff to ensure pupils are given appropriate support, and as a result pupils make good progress from nursery to Year 4. In Years 5 and 6 pupils with special educational needs make very good progress because the school organisation allows the special needs co-ordinator to focus on these children. At these times, teaching is very good.

19. The school's procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are sound overall and good for English, mathematics and science. They track pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science through the school by national, optional and end of unit tests and the teachers use this information to set targets for improvement. Teachers set pupils targets for improving their reading and writing but they are not used effectively to help pupils improve their work. Teachers' marking of pupils work is up to date and includes many positive comments; however, not all teachers use comments that would help the pupils to improve their work. In the nursery and reception classes, detailed assessments, made daily, help adults to see how well children are progressing and to give extra support when necessary.
20. Assessment in art, design and technology, geography, history and music is less rigorous and is an identified area for development by the school. This lack of accurate knowledge as to the standards pupils are achieving against those expected nationally, along with the differences in the quality of teaching, explain the disparity between standards in English, mathematics and science and those in the other subjects.

## The curriculum

The curriculum provided by the school is **satisfactory**. Pupils now enjoy a wide range of learning opportunities with the recent introduction of an 'enrichment afternoon'.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- A good range of activities enriches the school's curriculum.
- The school uses the English and mathematics curriculum well and successfully tries new approaches.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- The provision for physical education is very good.
- The provision for outdoor learning for children in nursery and reception is unsatisfactory.

## Commentary

21. The curriculum is satisfactory. Teachers teach the full range of subjects in the National Curriculum and all statutory requirements are met. The school has adopted nationally recommended schemes of work and this ensures that coverage is appropriate. The National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy are well developed and have contributed to the significant improvements in standards over the last three years. There are many opportunities for pupils to develop speaking and listening skills across the school. There are good links between literacy and other areas of the curriculum. In mathematics and ICT the links between other curriculum areas are satisfactory because most teachers, not all, are beginning to make and use these links.
22. Since the previous inspection, much has been added to enrich pupils' experience and provide a broad range of curricular opportunities, especially in physical education, drama, music and design and technology. By extending the school day, most of the extra-curricular activities have been incorporated into two afternoons of activities, which each year group from Year 1 to Year 6 experiences on one afternoon per week. All pupils therefore have the opportunity of these learning experiences and they contribute to their creative, personal, social and physical development. The school offers a good range of after-school clubs, which are well attended by pupils, and which provide additional learning opportunities. For example, visits to a local theatre are used to develop literacy skills and a visiting 'Africa' group helped to develop an understanding of music and dance. Residential courses at Derwent Hill Outdoor Centre in the Lake District are also used to enrich pupils' experience and understanding of subjects such as geography. Participation in sports activities is encouraged throughout the year through clubs such as basketball and football. The children fully appreciate these opportunities.

23. All pupils have the same opportunities for learning. Those with special educational needs are very well provided for and receive very good support from teaching assistants and support staff. Pupils' progress is closely monitored and expectations of them are high. The variety of strategies provided for pupils' needs enables them to make very good progress. This is a strength of the school.
24. Provision for ICT has improved and is now satisfactory. Provision with regard to the arts is satisfactory and is improving because of the recent development of an 'enrichment afternoon' where all pupils experience a range of art, music, drama and physical education activities one afternoon per week. The provision for social and health education is satisfactory. The views of children are valued, and information is collected through questionnaires and the recently formed School Council.
25. The accommodation and resources provided are satisfactory. The recent development of the library has enhanced provision in English, although this is not yet used much by pupils. The resources for ICT have also improved with the provision of a computer room. This has enabled an improvement in standards since the last inspection. Although accommodation is generally satisfactory, some classrooms are not supplied with water. The provision for outdoor learning is insufficient for children in nursery and reception.

### Care, guidance and support

The school provides **well** for the care and protection of pupils overall, and children in nursery and reception classes are **very well** cared for. Teachers provide **satisfactory** support and advice to pupils. Pupils have **good** opportunities to express their views and to be involved in the work of the school.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils feel happy and secure and can concentrate on their learning.
- Staff in the nursery and reception classes take great care helping children to become confident in school.
- The school asks pupils for their views and has set up a School Council, which is beginning to involve pupils in decisions about school issues.
- Teachers do not consistently use marking in books and the setting of targets to help pupils know what to do to improve.
- There is a possible hazard to pupils outside the school gates when parents park carelessly at the end of the school day.

### Commentary

26. The school has successfully developed an ethos of care that is reflected in procedures for health and safety and child protection, and in the care that all staff show to pupils and that pupils show for each other. The school provides good guidance for pupils through the curriculum to help them look after themselves, for example in eating sensibly and taking care on the roads. The staff in reception and nursery are very mindful of the children's welfare and ensure that they feel happy and secure in school. Parents do not always park with sufficient care when collecting their children at the end of the school day so that the resulting congestion is a potential hazard.
27. Nursery staff visit children and parents at home before they join the nursery. These visits are carefully planned to enable staff and families to get to know each other and to help parents to prepare the child for starting school. Resources provided by 'Sure Start' give valuable support to parents. Procedures to introduce children gradually to nursery and reception are flexible, and can be modified in response to the needs of individual children.

28. Relationships between staff and pupils are very good and most pupils feel that they can approach a member of staff with any problems they may have. Teachers and teaching assistants have a good knowledge of pupils' strengths and weaknesses and give good support during lessons. Currently the provision for the monitoring of pupils' personal development is unsatisfactory but the school has a system that is ready for implementation and once this is introduced it should rectify the situation. The marking of pupils' work and use of targets has not been consistently developed across the school to help all pupils understand what they need to do to improve.
29. The school has sought the views of pupils through questionnaires and pupils feel that their views are listened to and taken seriously. They are enthusiastic about the recently established School Council and the actions taken so far.

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

Links with parents are **good** and parents are very pleased with the education the school provides for their children. The school has made **good** use of resources in the community to support pupils' learning. Links with other schools and colleges are **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents have very positive views of the school and support its work.
- The school consults parents regularly and informs them of the results of surveys.
- Parents find the school to be very approachable so that pupils' education and welfare benefits from the sharing of information.
- The school has developed partnerships in the community that enhance the curriculum and extend opportunities for pupils' learning.
- Parents are well informed about their children's progress; however, parents are not always informed as to ways to help their children to improve their work.

### **Commentary**

30. The school has worked hard to develop a good partnership with parents through making them very welcome in school, listening to their concerns and consulting them regularly. Consultation involves regular questionnaires about parents' overall levels of satisfaction and specific issues. Parents appreciate the value the school places on their views. Parents are very pleased with the education their children receive and the improvements that the school has put in place. They feel that the school welcomes their views about their children and acts upon their concerns. The school keeps parents well informed about the planned curriculum and school events, but written reports to parents on their children's progress do not consistently provide information on ways to help their children improve their work. The school is working to involve parents in their children's education through provision of workshops and information on the curriculum, and some parents support the school through help in class and fundraising. Parents support their children's learning at home and some parents are able to offer support for children more generally in school.
31. The school has developed useful partnerships in the community to enrich the curriculum; for example, the school allows a local theatre group to use its premises free in return for productions about healthy living styles. Links established with a local company for specialist coaching staff for physical education have had the benefit of this company providing football coaching for pupils from this school and other local schools for a small fee on a Saturday morning. Links with the city museum supported work by the whole school on L.S. Lowry in response to an exhibition of his work. Links with the police are well established and popular with pupils. Partnership with Sure Start has provided very good resources to help parents of the youngest children to work with their children at home.



32. There are appropriate links with local secondary schools to support the transfer of pupils at the end of Year 6. The school provides opportunities for students to have experience of working in a school, and takes student teachers from the local university.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are **good**. Governance is **good** due to the support of an effective governing body. Systems of management are **efficient**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The leadership of the head teacher and senior management team is good.
- The governing body are very committed to ensuring school improvement and the resources to make this possible.
- There is a sharp focus on teaching and learning and evaluating the outcome, particularly in English, mathematics and science.
- The management of finances and staff is good and this ensures the school makes best use of these resources.
- The longer-term vision and direction of the school are not shared widely enough.
- The role of subject leaders in art, design and technology, geography, history and music is under-developed.

### **Commentary**

33. The effective leadership of the school, with a clear focus on raising standards, has been central to the school's success. The head teacher, appointed to the school two years ago, has good leadership, characterised by high expectations of staff, pupils and parents, and a supportive approach that makes everyone feel valued. Governors, staff and parents see this as an important strength of the school as it has contributed significantly to the high level of confidence within the school community and this in turn has helped the pupils to achieve higher standards.
34. The leadership over the last two years has successfully addressed the most important issues of raising standards and increasing the number of good and very good lessons and improving relationships with parents. This has been achieved through a very effective programme of staff development, which has been sensitively managed. Many new initiatives have been introduced and many, but not all, staff are consistently applying them in their classes. The senior management team and governors are now in a position to decide how the school is going to develop and the vision that the head teacher and senior managers have needs to be shared much more widely.
35. The school is well managed. The senior management team and the English and mathematics subject leaders rigorously evaluate the work of the teachers in English and mathematics and teachers value the constructive feedback about their planning, pupils' work and after lesson observations; this has led to good improvements in the quality of teaching and learning and has had a positive impact in the standards pupils achieve. The English, mathematics and science subject leaders meticulous monitoring of pupils' performance in national tests identifies the weaknesses in teaching and learning. These weaknesses are quickly rectified. An example of good subject leadership is the effective monitoring, by the English subject leader, of the implementation of the recent staff training into improving pupils' spelling and handwriting. The careful monitoring of this initiative has improved pupils' performance in writing across the whole curriculum. At present subject leaders for art, design and technology, geography, history and music do not track pupil progress against national expectations, or monitor, evaluate and provide feedback on the quality of teaching and help staff to improve pupils' achievements in these subjects.

36. The governing body work in close partnership with the head teacher and there is a consistent approach to school improvement. The school has developed a sound system for school self-evaluation. As a result of this process, the governors can identify priorities and have put in place a detailed action plan, which reflects their determination to improve their own performance, both individually and corporately. They understand the strengths and weaknesses of the school and are able to effectively challenge and support the work of the school. The governors fulfil their statutory requirements.
37. There is good management of both finances and school resources, including personnel. All are efficiently linked to priorities in the school development plan and, thus, the school is able to achieve its priorities. This approach is typified by the funding provided to support development. For example, governors negotiated a carefully constructed financial plan gaining the approval of the local education authority (LEA) for a substantial loan to ensure staffing and other resources could be properly maintained. This decision has been effective in the recent improvements in standards. Through careful budget management, the school and LEA expect the loan to be paid off by next year with no detrimental effects on staffing. Principles of best value are appropriately applied.

## Financial information

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

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	601066	Balance from previous year	-12323
Total expenditure	623984	Balance carried forward to the next	-35241
Expenditure per pupil	2277		

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

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

38. Provision for children in nursery and reception is satisfactory overall with some strengths. Overall teaching and learning in the nursery and reception classes are good. Teaching in the nursery is predominantly good because the activities set up by the staff encourage children to use and develop their skills in all areas of learning. For example, children are encouraged and expected to attempt their name when labelling their artwork. In the reception classes teaching and learning are always satisfactory and occasionally good. Staff in the reception classes sometimes over-direct activities. For example, children were provided with all the materials to make a face and were shown how to stick some fringe onto the face instead of encouraging them to make their own decisions. Children are well prepared for their move from nursery to reception and later to Year 1. Children enter the nursery in the term after their third birthday. All children achieve well because teaching is often good and teachers provide a wide variety of interesting activities that are well matched to individual need. Children with special educational needs are well catered for, with good support from all adults. All staff work together well, giving the children good role models. Good initial assessment and ongoing monitoring ensure that work is set at the correct level to meet individual children's needs. The satisfactory accommodation is enhanced by good quality displays. The outdoor area provides additional space for learning but is barren and does not inspire or motivate children. Reception children are given insufficient opportunity to work in the outdoor area. Relationships with parents are good and this has a very positive effect on encouraging parents to help their children, for example when reading books and games are taken home. Co-operative leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are developing well and are beginning to have a positive impact on standards and children's achievements. There is still work to be done in order to ensure greater co-operation in the planning process, particularly for the use of the outdoor play area.

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

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

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

- Children settle into well-organised routines very quickly.
- Staff provide good role models for the children.
- Teachers plan well for this area of the curriculum.
- Children with special educational needs are included in all aspects of the curriculum.

#### **Commentary**

39. There is a wide range of attainment in personal and social skills when children enter the nursery but overall attainment is below average in this area. Children settle into nursery very quickly because induction arrangements are very good and there are very clear systems in place. Children enter nursery at the start of each session with confidence and select an activity from the interesting range, covering all areas of learning which are available. There is good quality teaching in both nursery and reception and this leads to good knowledge and achievement. Teachers and support staff greet children warmly and this develops their confidence and self-esteem. There are high expectations of behaviour and children respond well to this.
40. Children in both nursery and reception are encouraged to take turns and co-operate with each other in all activities. Adults ensure that children feel secure and confident. By the end of

reception the majority of children have attained the expected goals. Children are well mannered, listen to each other, take turns and work well without direct adult supervision.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children make good progress in the acquisition of speaking and listening skills.
- Children with special educational needs receive good support and achieve well.
- Parents are encouraged to help in the development of reading and speaking and listening skills.

### **Commentary**

41. Children enter nursery with below average skills in speaking and listening. Children in both nursery and reception make good progress and achieve well because teaching is consistently good in this area of learning. Children with special educational needs achieve well because of the additional support they receive and because teachers plan to meet individual children's needs. Teachers provide many opportunities for children to develop their writing skills; for example, within role-play the nursery children were writing appointments for the optician and were making marks in sand to represent letters. Children in nursery and reception are given a wide range of opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills, for example within a whole-class discussion in reception. Teachers and support staff develop children's spoken language well through effective modelling and through good questioning techniques. From the start of nursery, children are taught to handle books, and to listen to stories independently through the use of story tapes. Parents are encouraged to read and talk with their children at home through the provision of 'Chatterbox' bags and 'Talk' bags provided by Sure Start.
42. The majority of children reach the expected goals by the end of reception. Children speak clearly. They listen well and respond appropriately to questions. The majority recognise initial sounds both orally and visually and read simple words and sentences by the end of the reception year. In writing most children form recognisable letters and write their name and simple words.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory** overall.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Achievement of children is good in number work; however, it is satisfactory in the other aspects of mathematical development.
- Children with special educational needs receive good support and achieve well.
- Teachers use questioning effectively to develop children's mathematical understanding.

### **Commentary**

43. Children enter nursery with attainment that is average and by the time they leave reception many have exceeded the expected levels of attainment in number and the majority attain expected levels in the use of mathematical vocabulary and the solving of simple problems. Children achieve these standards because of the good teaching in nursery and reception. The staff use a variety of songs and rhymes to develop awareness and understanding. For example, the nursery children were taught a rhyme to help develop understanding of the properties of a triangle. Mental mathematics sessions are used effectively to develop counting skills in reception. Adults use all available opportunities to develop mathematical vocabulary

successfully. For example, reception children were taken on a 'shape' walk around the school. Work is planned effectively to meet the needs of children with special educational needs and for higher attaining children. Additional support is used well to enhance learning. Good practical activities including the use of sand and water help to develop children's understanding of capacity.

44. By the end of reception the majority of children can recognise one and two-digit numbers to 20 and can identify 'one more' or 'one less' than a given number with the aid of a number line. The majority are able to name three-dimensional shapes such as cylinders, cubes, and cones. Their ability to use a wide range of mathematical vocabulary such as 'greater' and 'smaller', 'heavier' and 'lighter', 'in front of', 'behind' and 'beside', and to solve simple problems such as "find me a shape to make a dice", is less well developed.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- ICT is used well to support learning.
- Children are offered a wide range of interesting and enjoyable activities.

### **Commentary**

45. The majority of children achieve the expected goals by the end of the reception year because of good quality teaching. Teachers ensure that children are given a wide range of activities that both interest and stimulate their learning. Computers are used effectively to develop skills in many areas of the curriculum, including language and mathematical development. Children use the mouse well to select objects and 'drag' them to a different location. Adults use questioning skills well to develop children's understanding of the world around them. Role-play is used to develop understanding of times past. For example, reception children dressed in Victorian costumes and played in a Victorian kitchen using artefacts and pictures to extend their knowledge. Scientific skills are developed effectively by the use of equipment such as magnifying glasses. Construction kits are used for model making and children regularly have access to modelling materials such as play dough.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision for physical development is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The outdoor play area is not a stimulating environment for learning.
- Reception children are given too few opportunities to use outdoor play facilities.
- Planning for outdoor play is unsatisfactory.

### **Commentary**

46. No hall sessions were observed but children were observed in outdoor play sessions in nursery and whilst engaged in a variety of situations across both nursery and reception. Children enter school with average physical skills. By the time they leave reception the majority of children achieve the expected goals. Nursery children slide, balance, and step over and around obstacles with increasing control and co-ordination. Children show good control and an increasing awareness of others when using tricycles and prams. Teachers and support staff develop children's physical skills through a wide range of activities. Children display appropriate

manipulation skills when handling dough, scissors and small toys. They have been taught how to use pencils and paintbrushes securely and the majority do so with the correct grip.

47. Children have limited opportunities for outdoor play and children in the reception classes do not have sufficient access to the outside area. The outside area is barren and does not inspire or motivate children and this restricts opportunities for physical development. This provision for outdoor play is unsatisfactory.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision for creative development is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children show good attitudes to creative development.
- Activities are at times over-directed.

### **Commentary**

48. The majority of children achieve expected levels by the end of reception. A wide range of activities is provided by the teachers and the support staff. Adults work alongside the children as they learn how to mix paint; however, activities are occasionally over-directed, particularly in the reception classes. Paintings produced in the style of Lowry are of a good standard. These are a result of children visiting the recent exhibition of Lowry's work at the Sunderland Museum. Creative development is used effectively to contribute to aspects of cultural development. Teachers frequently use songs to enhance learning in other areas of the curriculum and for enjoyment. Children show good and often very good attitudes to learning. This allows teachers and support staff to help others as necessary. By the end of reception children have appropriate manipulative skills and can hold pencils and paintbrushes appropriately. They can cut and stick but are at times given too much adult support within these activities.

## **SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2**

### **ENGLISH**

The provision for English is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are improving and are now good.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good and pupils achieve well.
- Marking of pupils' work and the setting of targets are not consistently applied by all teachers so that pupils know how to improve their work.
- There is effective tracking of pupils' progress.
- The subject leader provides good leadership and management, and this has contributed to the improved standards.

### **Commentary**

49. Standards in English are rising because the staff have worked hard and successfully to improve them. This is evident in the findings of this inspection as standards in all aspects of English by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are above the national average. This is an improvement on the 2003 national test results where standards in English at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 were average. The contributory factors to the improved standards are the substantial staff training which has improved teachers' subject knowledge, the regular evaluation of teachers' work and the clear guidance they have received on how to improve their

practice. The school's systems for tracking pupils' progress against national standards and putting in appropriate support if and when required have also contributed to the improved standards.

50. Overall, higher attaining pupils and those with special educational needs achieve well. This is because the school uses its pupil progress tracking system successfully to match work to pupils' abilities. Challenging higher attaining pupils has been a recent focus of the school's work to raise standards and the work the staff have done is beginning to have a positive impact throughout the school. It is particularly good in Year 6. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported through the good use of teaching assistants and the careful planning of their work. Pupils with special educational needs in Years 5 and 6 achieve very well because of the very good teaching.
51. By Year 2, most pupils speak and listen well in class and group situations. They speak clearly and make sensible contributions to discussions because they listen to each other. By Year 6, most pupils use expression well, for example when speaking to others, reading aloud or pretending to be a character in a drama lesson. They listen well and make thoughtful contributions to a discussion or when answering questions. The staff provide many opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills by:
- encouraging them to work in pairs and small groups;
  - expecting them to answer questions fully;
  - providing pupils with thinking time before they need to answer a more complex question;
  - asking pupils to explain their thoughts or solutions to work;
  - using drama to promote self-confidence.
52. Pupils now achieve well in reading because the school has recently purchased many new books that have really enthused the children, particularly those who were reluctant to read, and staff have placed an emphasis on developing pupils' reading skills. Generally, books are well displayed in the library, but few other displays include books. Most pupils in Year 2 are confident, fluent readers and use expression when reading aloud. In addition to reading in school, all pupils are encouraged to, and most do, read to a parent or carer at home, and this helps them to improve their reading skills. Most pupils in Year 6 enjoy reading novels, particularly the ones recently purchased by the school, for enjoyment. They use the Internet and non-fiction books skilfully to gather information for topics. Most pupils have a range of strategies for working out unfamiliar words and are confident when tackling new texts. Pupils are well challenged by the staff to develop their comprehension skills by discussing and answering questions about:
- the main events in a story;
  - the possible future developments in a plot;
  - the characters in a book;
  - the most important pieces of information in a non-fiction text.
53. Staff have worked hard and successfully to improve standards in writing. Pupils achieve well and standards are above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well, particularly in the mixed Year 5 and 6 class, because the teacher knows and shares with the pupils what they need to achieve next and is able to explain this clearly to them. In one lesson she shared with pupils a piece of written text, which had all of the common errors that they make. This activity engaged the pupils in discussing and deciding what was wrong and how to put it right before they completed their own writing. Teachers provide pupils with a very wide range of fictional and non-fictional writing experiences such as writing play-scripts, instructions, poetry and stories. Standards in spelling and handwriting are good. It is the high expectations that are consistently applied by teachers across all subjects that have made a positive contribution to the improved standards.

54. In the lessons and work seen, the quality of teaching ranged from satisfactory to very good and was good overall. The improved quality of teaching since the previous inspection has made a positive contribution to pupils' achievements and the raising of standards. The substantial amount of professional development has improved the teachers' and teaching assistants' knowledge and understanding of the National Literacy Strategy. Teachers plan systematically so that skills can be practised, new knowledge is learnt and the work pupils have to do is at an appropriate level. There is a good pace to lessons, which ensures pupils remain interested. Teachers' good questioning skills and the use of pupils' contributions to develop the lesson ensure that all pupils are involved throughout the lesson. Teachers' marking of pupils work is up to date and includes many positive comments; however, comments that would help the pupils to improve their work are not used by all teachers. Marking is most effective in Years 5 and 6. Similarly, the effective use of targets for pupils to improve their work is inconsistent. Teaching assistants are used effectively and make a positive contribution to pupils' learning.
55. The subject leader provides good leadership and management and ensures that the National Literacy Strategy is having a good impact upon teaching and learning. Standards and the quality of teaching and learning have improved because the monitoring, evaluation and feedback to staff on lessons, pupils' work and pupils' progress through optional, national and end of unit test results, have been effective. This has been central to the good improvements pupils have made in the standards that they achieve.

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

56. Pupils use their language and literacy skills well in other subjects. This is because teachers plan and expect consistent standards from pupils when using their speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. The effective use of a drama consultant enhances pupils' experiences in speaking and listening by providing them with many opportunities to act out situations such as an incidence of 'telling tales' and then pupils are asked to evaluate their own work and other people's work and to listen to the consultant's appraisal of their work.

## **MATHEMATICS**

The school's provision for mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- As a result of good teaching, standards are rising and are now good.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and as a result they make very good progress by the end of Key Stage 2.
- Good subject leadership ensures that the National Numeracy Strategy is delivered effectively.
- Marking and target setting are not used consistently to help pupils improve their work.

### **Commentary**

57. Standards in mathematics are improving because teaching is good and pupils are given work that is well matched to their ability. Standards in mathematics have improved at the end of Year 2 and are in line with national expectations. The standards have improved because the staff have analysed the 2003 results and used this information to address the areas of weakness such as developing pupils' ability to solve simple problems. Pupils' achievement in Years 3 to 6 is good and standards are above average because teaching is good. The school analyses pupils' performance in tests and tracks their progress successfully. Information is used to group pupils so that support for pupils experiencing difficulties is well organised. In Years 6, pupils are set individual targets and teachers mark work with these in mind so that pupils have a very clear understanding of what they need to do to improve. In one Year 6 lesson, a pupil clearly explained to the teacher why she thought she might have difficulties with a particular set of 'sums' and having talked it through with the teacher, confidently set about her work. Marking,



assessment and target setting are satisfactory. The subject leader has plans to provide training to further improve these areas and to ensure there is a more consistent whole-school approach.

58. There is a good emphasis upon helping pupils develop suitable methods of calculation that improve their speed and accuracy. Throughout the school, pupils confidently explain to their class their approach to problem solving, though in some Key Stage 1 classes there is sometimes insufficient time allowed for pupils to discuss and share ideas. From Year 1, where pupils add three numbers on the interactive whiteboard, to Year 6, where they explain their approach to multiplication and division by 10, 100, 1000, and the equivalence of decimals, percentages and fractions, pupils are developing a good logical approach to their work. Pupils are regularly given opportunities to solve problems but there are few opportunities for them to use computers to support their mathematical investigations. Homework is set in most classes but not reviewed consistently as part of lessons.
59. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and as a result they make very good progress by the end of Key Stage 2. The school has employed additional staff to provide lessons for pupils who have difficulties with mathematics and English. Teachers and support staff understand and meet the needs of their pupils well. Lessons have a good pace and offer a good blend of challenge and support for learning. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to talk about their learning and give appropriate emphasis to teaching the language of mathematics. This helps pupils when they are faced with written problems in their assessments. For example, pupils talk about why they use factors when multiplying or dividing large numbers such as  $640 \times 8$  or  $864/6$ . Resources are used very effectively to keep pupils interested in their learning. For example, pupils are having a lot of success with an individual learning program. Pupils take responsibility for their learning on this computer program and teachers monitor their progress. This is having a good impact on improving standards in mathematics.
60. The mathematics curriculum is effectively led and managed to ensure that the National Numeracy Strategy is having a good impact upon teaching and learning. Training and advice for staff have effectively improved teachers' skills and increased pupils' achievement. Monitoring teachers' planning and pupils' achievement has provided a good basis for deploying staff and resources so that pupils have a good learning experience in all lessons.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

61. Teachers are beginning to make links between mathematics and other subjects such as geography, science and history. This is sometimes done through ICT where young pupils use simple databases and older pupils use *Excel* spreadsheets. However, mathematics is not used as effectively as it should be to support learning in other subjects.

## **SCIENCE**

The overall quality of provision for science is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards at the end of Year 6 are above average.
- Teaching is good and helps all pupils achieve well.
- There are good opportunities for pupils to learn from investigations, although higher attaining pupils should be challenged more when planning and carrying out investigations.

### **Commentary**

62. By the end of Year 2, pupils are also involved with learning from investigations. They are learning ideas such as fair testing and are invited to suggest explanations as to why certain events happen. In a lesson exploring materials in Year 1 one boy disagreed with the answers provided and was able to give his own explanation. Higher attaining pupils name various sources of light and sound, and they have a developing knowledge of how solids and liquids can change their form.
63. By the end of Year 6, standards in science are above average. Standards have improved steadily over the last three years and in the most recent National Curriculum tests, standards were above the national average and better than those in similar schools. By the end of Year 6, achievement is good and pupils have made good progress since the end of Key Stage 1. This shows some improvement since the last inspection. By the end of Year 2, standards are satisfactory and in line with the national average.
64. The school places an appropriate emphasis on the development of investigative work. As a result, pupils learn good enquiry skills, developing a sense of curiosity and a wide range of knowledge. However, higher attaining pupils do not get enough opportunity to plan and carry out investigations independently and this means that some pupils do not achieve the higher grades in the national tests. Pupils achieve a good understanding of scientific concepts. For example, Year 6 pupils learning about space understand the forces of gravity and know that stars are made of burning gases at very high temperatures. In their experimental work, pupils are aware of the importance of fair testing and accurate measurements but are less confident at explaining the usefulness of repeating experiments to check outcomes. There is little evidence of pupils using ICT to record findings or to store and analyse results. Pupils have good knowledge of materials and understand that some changes are irreversible. Apart from some lower attaining pupils, most have a clear understanding of forces such as gravity and the effect of friction. They know the characteristics of solids, liquids and gases and have a good understanding of forces and their effects in terms of speeding up, slowing down and changing the direction of an object.
65. Teaching in science is good overall. Teachers plan interesting investigations with practical activities in which pupils can take part. As a result pupils learn effectively and develop good science skills. However, higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged when planning and carrying out investigations. Teachers have a satisfactory knowledge of the subject and use correct scientific terms when they talk to pupils. This effectively encourages pupils to use words such as 'orbit' when they talk about the movement of planets. Those with special educational needs are sensitively supported by teaching assistants and are guided by effective assessments to tasks which best meet their needs.
66. The subject is effectively led and managed with an appropriate emphasis on the development of investigative work. Training and advice for staff have effectively improved teachers' skills. Monitoring teachers' planning and pupils' progress through tests has resulted in improved standards.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision for ICT is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are rising because the subject is well led and managed, giving teachers the confidence to use ICT.
- Access to good quality resources has improved pupils' achievement but access to resources for control and sensing is limited.
- Pupils' enthusiasm for the subject makes a significant contribution to their good achievement in most lessons.

- In some lessons teachers spend too much time dealing with low-level technical problems.

## Commentary

67. Standards in ICT are now broadly in line with national expectations at both key stages. This is an improvement on the previous inspection when they were judged to be low. Improvement is due to better leadership and management of the subject. This has enabled teachers to gain the confidence to teach ICT by attending in-service training and 'drop-in' sessions provided by the subject leader and the LEA. Teachers now use the new resources in the ICT suite effectively, to teach pupils the basic skills they need to support their learning in other subjects. Effective management and pupils' enthusiasm for ICT make a significant contribution to rising standards. Pupil achievement in both key stages is now satisfactory. Teachers are more confident in using ICT than at the previous inspection.
68. The subject leader provides plans and guidance to help teachers with the ICT curriculum. As a result, the youngest pupils are beginning to appreciate ICT in the world around them, recognising the everyday use of calculators, computers, radios, telephones and other devices. By the end of Year 2, pupils are using the computer to make pictures and write text and some use the Internet, with help, to search for information. The oldest pupils make use of word-processing and publishing software to present information for a range of purposes and to a range of people. They have well-developed skills in using multimedia software such as *PowerPoint*. Teachers have the confidence and skill to help pupils' use of the Internet to exchange e-mails or research topics to support their learning in history, science and geography. Pupils in Year 5 are currently using the Internet to look for information on the Tudor period and, in Year 6, pupils are preparing multimedia presentations on the environment.
69. Pupils' achievement is generally satisfactory. In most lessons, pupils work in expert-novice pairs where collaboration between pupils raises achievement. This was particularly effective where Years 3 and 4 pupils were using a music program and where Year 5 pupils were searching the Internet for information about the Tudors. High levels of access to computers at home are a significant factor in pupils' achievement.
70. Teaching in ICT is satisfactory and teachers capitalise on pupils' enthusiasm for the subject with lessons that have a good pace. Teachers familiarise themselves with applications they are to use and most lessons begin with a confident demonstration which keeps all pupils interested and eager to learn. However, too often teachers spend too much time troubleshooting minor technical problems to keep the lesson on track and this distracts them from their main responsibilities to the class. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, as observed in a Key Stage 2 lesson on data handling, teaching is at the pace of the slowest pupils and for those who already have good skills, learning slows and they quickly become bored and drift off task.
71. The school has a computer suite with 15 computers that are networked so that teachers and pupils can share resources. Resources are well managed and the support from a part-time technician is highly valued. These resources provide the mainstay of teaching basic ICT skills but because of the limitations of the timetable, opportunities to use the suite independently to support learning in other subjects are limited. All classrooms have a computer but these are not used effectively enough across the curriculum. Though the ICT suite is generally well resourced, there is insufficient control or sensing equipment.

## Information and communication technology across the curriculum

72. Children in nursery and reception classes have many good opportunities to experience using ICT across the curriculum. Overall, in the rest of the school, the use of ICT across the curriculum is satisfactory. Some teachers use ICT effectively across the curriculum, whereas other teachers are just beginning to use appropriate links. This is an area that the school has identified for further development. Good use is made of the ICT suite to develop pupils' computer skills and for them to gather information and develop presentations for other subjects. Sometimes the use of ICT to support learning across the curriculum is restricted by the lack of opportunities for pupils to have access to a computer and the Internet within their classrooms.

## HUMANITIES

### Commentary

73. In humanities, work was sampled in **history** and **geography** with only one lesson seen in each subject. It is therefore not possible to form an overall judgement about provision in these subjects. There is every indication from pupils' work that standards are broadly average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
74. During the inspection one Key Stage 2 lesson was observed in each subject, both taking place in the ICT suite. This is an improvement on the previous inspection where ICT was not used to support pupils' learning in history and geography. Pupils' achievement and the standards they reach in both subjects are broadly average at the end of both key stages. Pupils with special educational needs make sound progress. The school makes good use of its local area and visits and visitors to the school to support the curriculum opportunities in these subjects.
75. In **history**, pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 recognise that information about the past can be found on television, in libraries, in museums and from photographs, though they do not talk confidently about the lives of people beyond their living memory. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 study many historical topics and have recently produced projects on the Aztecs and are currently researching Tudor life and times on the Internet.
76. In **geography**, pupils in Year 1 and 2 are beginning to explore their local environment by discussing issues such as 'How to make the local environment safer'. They use photographs and drawings to explore this issue and produce simple maps illustrating features around their school. In Year 3 to Year 6 pupils extend their learning to look beyond Britain and make comparisons between locations around the world. For example, they compare holiday locations as diverse as Blackpool and Florida in terms of climate and major landmarks. One pupils commented, "I'd like to see the pyramids and explore the desert", as he described the main geographical features of Egypt. Pupils also prepare in-depth studies of environmental issues, and as in Key Stage 1 they explore their local area. Year 6 pupils are currently looking at changes in the local area as a result of a major housing development near to the school.
77. Teaching in both lessons was satisfactory. The lessons were well planned and pupils made good use of the resources in the ICT suite. Work in pupils' books is marked regularly but, across the school, teachers do not consistently provide comments to help pupils improve their work. Teachers do provide opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in literacy and numeracy such as report writing and the use of spreadsheets to record, sort and present information in graphs about climate around the world.
78. The school's priority has been to raise standards in the English, mathematics and science and this has resulted in insufficient time to develop the role of the subject leaders in history and geography. To raise standards further and make better use of resources and time allocated to history and geography, subject leaders need to have similar opportunities to lead and manage these subjects to those afforded to the leaders of English, mathematics and science.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

### Commentary

79. The school provides a range of opportunities for pupils to develop their creative skills both within the curriculum and as part of the school's enrichment afternoon. During the inspection some lessons within the curriculum and as part of the enrichment afternoon were sampled and inspectors spoke to subject leaders about their work and looked at pupils' work. The subject leaders have recently taken up their responsibilities and although they are enthusiastic as yet

they have not had time to track pupil progress against national expectations, monitor, evaluate and provide feedback on the quality of teaching and help staff to improve pupils' achievements in these subjects. The role of the subject leaders for art and design, design and technology and music is unsatisfactory, however the school has identified this as an area for development, and training for them to develop their role is planned.

80. In **art and design**, one lesson as part of the enrichment afternoon was observed, pupils' work in displays and in sketchbooks was looked at and the inspectors spoke to the subject leaders. It is not possible to make a firm judgement about provision. There are interesting displays of artwork around the school and some are the result of work carried out with visiting artists. This work tends to be of a higher standard than work produced with class teachers. The art and design curriculum enables pupils to experience separate units of work, including a close study of the work of a particular painter. Pupils have recently visited an exhibition of Lowry's work and this provided a stimulus for their own work back in school. Pupils use sketchbooks, but their use is underdeveloped. However, work seen suggests that standards are average across the school. Resources are satisfactory overall.

## **Design and technology**

Provision for design technology is **unsatisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching and learning in the lessons delivered by the additional teacher in the enrichment afternoons were good.
- Insufficient emphasis is given to designing a product.
- Standards by the end of Year 6 are below national expectations.
- Subject leadership is unsatisfactory.

### **Commentary**

81. Four lessons were observed in design and technology. The two lessons delivered by an additional teacher in the enrichment afternoon were good; the other two lessons delivered by the class teachers were satisfactory. However, scrutiny of work and discussion with pupils indicates that design and technology needs greater focus in Years 3 to 6 and standards by the end of Year 6 are below average. Insufficient emphasis is given to designing products, particularly in Years 3 to 6. Resources are satisfactory; however, the specialist design and technology room is under-used.

## **Music**

Provision for music is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils receive additional opportunities to experience music activities in the 'enrichment afternoons'.
- There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to compose music.

### **Commentary**

82. In music, pupils were observed in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6. Four lessons were observed: two taken by class teachers and the others by a consultant as part of the enrichment afternoon. Overall teaching and learning are satisfactory. Pupils were observed singing in a variety of situations, but there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to compose their own music. The quality of the provision for music is satisfactory overall. Music features as a focus area in the school

development plan. Developments cover staff training, working with the LEA advisory teacher, an Advanced Skills Teacher and the improvement of resources. Staff are working hard to improve their subject expertise and standards of pupils' work overall are average across the school. Music forms part of the regular enrichment afternoons. Resources are satisfactory overall and a specialist music room is timetabled for regular use.

## **Physical education**

Provision for physical education is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards in physical education are above average, because of the very good teaching by the professional coaches bought in by the school.
- Pupils of all abilities, including the higher attaining and those with special educational needs, achieve well.
- Subject leadership is effective.

### **Commentary**

83. In physical education, four lessons were observed, all taken by professional coaches. Two of the four lessons were part of the school's enrichment programme. The very good teaching provided by the professional coaches promotes good achievement in pupils. A very good range of extra-curricular activities takes place through the enrichment afternoons and after-school activities, including gymnastics, 'kwik' cricket and football. Pupils who have special educational needs are supported particularly well, and are enabled to achieve as well as their peers. Community facilities are used to extend the provision such as the Puma Centre for tennis coaching. Year 3 and 4 pupils access specialist swimming coaching at the local comprehensive school. Year 5 and 6 pupils have the opportunity to develop outdoor skills through a residential visit to Derwent Hill. Subject leadership is enthusiastic and there is systematic monitoring and evaluation of the subject.

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

84. Only one lesson was seen in this area of the school's work and so no judgements are made about overall provision. The school sees pupils' personal development as an important part of its work although this area is not formally monitored. The programme for personal, social and health education is good and includes work on diet, sex, drugs and personal safety. The use of drama in the enrichment afternoon makes a positive contribution to developing pupils' personal skills, including how to manage conflict. The recently introduced School Council is providing opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively on an issue they are concerned about. The subject leader for personal, social and health education has invested a lot of time in establishing the School Council and this involved some training for pupils with the local secondary school.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
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>2</b>
Attendance	4
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
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	4
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the head teacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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