

INSPECTION REPORT

**SS ALBAN AND STEPHEN RC INFANT AND NURSERY
SCHOOL**

St Albans

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 117450

Headteacher: Mrs Paula Holden

Lead inspector: Mr G Timms

Dates of inspection: 8 – 10 December 2003

Inspection number: 262990

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	3 – 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	194
School address:	Vanda Crescent St Albans Hertfordshire
Postcode:	AL1 5EX
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs M Deshpande
Date of previous inspection:	19 October 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Ss Alban and Stephen Infant School has 194 pupils on roll including 50 in the Nursery class who attended on a part-time basis at the time of the inspection. Although there is a range of ability, the attainment of most pupils when they enter the school is broadly in line with that expected for their ages, although often below average for the local education authority. This varies significantly from year to year; for example, the present Reception children were below average in communication, language and literacy skills and their mathematical development. Girls tend to be more advanced than boys when they start school. There are 34 pupils on the register of special educational need, including eight in the Nursery. One pupil has a statement of special need entitling them to extra support. This is broadly average when compared with schools nationally. The main needs are speech and communication difficulties. Although the majority of the pupils are of white British descent, the school takes pupils from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds and cultures. A small proportion of these are from Traveller families. The most common minority backgrounds are white but non-British; mixed; and Bangladeshi. Fifty three of the pupils do not have English as their first language and twenty-six are at an early stage of acquiring the language. The most common languages spoken after English are Bengali and Italian. The school receives support for 46 of these pupils. The proportion of the parents who claim their entitlement to free school meals is below the national average. The school has achieved Investors in People status and in 2003 an award for the pupils' achievement. Other awards include one for working in partnership with the University of Hertfordshire.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21038	Mr G Timms	Lead inspector	Foundation Stage Information and communication technology Creative, aesthetic, practical and physical subjects
9619	Mr B Miller	Lay inspector	
19897	Mr A Evans	Team inspector	Mathematics Science Personal, social and health education
19774	Mrs M Docherty	Team inspector	English Humanities Special educational needs English as an additional language

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good, effective school with many strengths, and it provides good value for money. Standards are above average and pupils' make good progress and achieve well. The governance of the school is excellent and has a real impact on standards. The leadership demonstrated by the headteacher and in the Foundation Stage is very good.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards were well above average in the 2003 national tests. Current standards are above average.
- The teaching is good overall, and very good in the Foundation Stage.
- Where the teaching is less strong, the management of pupils' behaviour is inconsistent and the involvement of pupils with English as an additional language is less effective.
- The governing body provide an excellent level of support and challenge for the school
- The headteacher provides very good leadership and the school is well managed and efficiently run.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good overall and very good in the Foundation Stage. Their relationships with each other, and other adults, are very good.
- The school provides a very good level of care and support for the pupils and links with parents are very good.
- Attendance is below average when compared with other schools.
- Building improvements are needed to support full access to the school by adults and pupils with disabilities.

There has been a good level of improvement since the last inspection, and the staff and governing body have worked hard to maintain the good standards and levels of achievement. The provision for information and communication technology (ICT) has been very well developed and standards are now above those expected.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Pupils' achievement is good overall in Years 1 and 2, and very good in the Foundation Stage. Pupils' attainment on entry varies from year to year but overall is broadly in line with that expected for their age. When they enter the Nursery, a significant proportion of the children have a level of development below average. They make very good progress through the early stages of the Foundation stage curriculum, although a number are still below average when they begin in the Reception class. For example, this year their social and emotional development, and their communication, language and literacy skills are underdeveloped compared with elsewhere in the local authority. Further very good progress is made and by the end of the Reception year the majority of the children have achieved the expected early learning goals, and many have exceeded them. This provides them with a very good start to their statutory schooling in the National Curriculum in Years 1 and 2.

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
reading	B	A	A	A
writing	A	A	A	A
mathematics	A	A*	A	A

*Key: A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average
Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals*

In the 2003 national tests, the standards in reading, writing and mathematics were well above average when compared with all schools nationally. When they are compared with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, standards were also well above average. The girls tend to outperform the boys, as is the case nationally, but in reading and writing this is only a slight difference. In mathematics, however, the girls exceed the national average by almost twice as much as the boys. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics were well above average, and this indicates that the school is helping the higher attaining pupils achieve well. Current standards, as evident during the inspection, are above average. This is true for the core subjects of English, mathematics, science and ICT. Although the other subjects were not inspected in detail, from the available evidence standards in art and design, music and physical education are also above those expected. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well. Those with English as an additional language also achieve well except in those lessons where their specific needs are not taken sufficiently into account. In the best lessons, these pupils are well supported and they achieve well. Pupils have good attitudes to learning and enjoy coming to school. Pupils' behaviour is good. Attendance is unsatisfactory but the punctuality of the pupils is good. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good. The quality of teaching is very good in the Nursery and Reception classes, and good overall. The very good teaching in the Nursery and Reception classes is the result of very good planning and team work between the three teachers and their support staff. Lessons contain a very appropriate balance between play based activities, child-selected activities and direct teaching. The teachers have worked hard to develop the use of the outdoor facilities and very good links to class work are made. The good teaching evident throughout Years 1 and 2 supports pupils' learning well and results in the good progress made by pupils leading to the national tests at the end of Year 2. The best lessons have clear learning objectives that are shared with the pupils, helping them to understand what is expected of them. The good quality and knowledgeable teaching assistants provide good support for teachers, and are often well deployed during whole class teaching. Where the teaching is weaker, it is often characterised by inconsistent behaviour management. At times, the small proportion of difficult pupils is not dealt with effectively and this has an impact on their learning. Teachers do not always use sufficient strategies known to be helpful to pupils developing English as an additional language. There is a broad and balanced curriculum focusing on English, mathematics and science, with good provision in personal, social and health education. It is well enriched with visits and visitors and good links to the junior school. The accommodation is good overall, although the school does not provide full access for adults and pupils with disabilities. The school is well resourced. Provision for pupils' care, guidance and support are very good. The school involves pupils well in consultation about school improvement. The school's links with parents and other schools and colleges are very good. There are good links with the community.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The governing body is exceptionally well organised and involved in the work of the school. They have a very clear understanding of the current issues facing the school. The headteacher has a clear vision for the future development of the school and appropriately high expectations of the pupils and staff. The school's self evaluation is good and target setting is based appropriately on pupils' prior attainment. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are very good. Subject leadership is good and staff work hard to support each other. The subject co-ordinators monitor their subjects well through observations, the scrutiny of pupils' work and the teachers' planning.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The results of an analysis of the parent questionnaires, and the feeling of the meeting held by inspectors for parents, were very positive. Almost all parents feel the school is well led and managed, that their children like school, the teaching is good, arrangements for starting school are

good and they find the school approachable when they have a complaint or a query. The findings of the inspection support these positive views. There were no issues that a significant proportion of parents were concerned about, but a small number feel that more information about the Foundation Stage curriculum would be valuable, especially when the children start school. The pupils spoken to were clearly happy at school.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- improve the quality of teaching further by:
 - making the provision for pupils at an early stage of learning English more consistent in all lessons;
 - ensuring teachers manage pupils' behaviour more consistently;
- improve access for the pupils, staff and parents with severe mobility problems;
- improve attendance by reducing the amount of family holidays taken in term time.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Standards are **good** in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2. Pupils' achievement is **very good** in the Foundation Stage and **largely good** throughout Years 1 and 2.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes and achieve very well.
- Standards in the last national tests at the end of Year 2 were well above average.
- Current standards are good in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology.
- Standards in non-core subjects are often higher than those expected.
- The progress made by pupils with English as an additional language, is satisfactory, although the school has recognised that there is some underachievement.

Commentary

1. When children enter the Nursery, they have a range of ability and are at differing levels of attainment. One cohort differs from another and often has different strengths and weaknesses. For example, the children are often above average in their physical development but the present Reception class were below average in their social and emotional development and for their language and literacy skills. They make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes as a result of the very good teaching and support staff provision. The majority of the children are likely to achieve or exceed the expected early learning goals by the end of the Reception year.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	17.2 (17.8)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	16.2 (16.3)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	18.0 (18.9)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 60 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. In the 2003 national tests, although the standards fell slightly when compared to 2002, in reading, writing and mathematics they were well above average when compared with all schools nationally. When they are compared with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, standards were also well above average. The trend in test results over time is broadly in line with that found nationally, and the high standards have been maintained since the last inspection. The standards in information and communication technology (ICT) have improved greatly since the last inspection due to the improved resources and the training staff have received.
3. The girls tend to outperform the boys, as is the case nationally, but in reading and writing this is only a slight difference. In mathematics, however, the girls exceed the national average by almost twice as much as the boys. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics were well above average, and this indicates that the school is helping the higher attaining pupils achieve well. In science, where there is no test but grades are given on the basis of teacher assessment, the results were lower, but the evidence

supports the school's view that this was due to the quality of the assessment rather than the actual standards demonstrated by the pupils. This may also have been the case in the below average levels achieved in speaking and listening, and experimental and investigative science.

4. Current standards are above average in English, mathematics, science and ICT. Although the other subjects were not inspected in detail, from the available evidence standards in art and design, music and physical education are also above those expected.
5. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well, particularly in the Foundation Stage where a broad range of practical activities gives good opportunities for children to understand new learning. Where pupils are given additional support in class, they make good progress in attaining the targets in their individual educational plans.
6. Standards of achievement of pupils with English as an additional language in the Foundation Stage are good because of the visual and practical activities typical in early years education and the many opportunities for pupils to talk together as they play. A good range of role-play activities allows them to understand the conventions of behaviour and language in different settings. In Reception, pupils are being introduced to written language through presentation of enlarged texts, where language gets repeated naturally as the stories unfold, and children join in the repeated refrains with confidence, modelling their own language on that of their more experienced English-speaking classmates. For example, in the story "Mr Gumpy's Outing", they join in his invitations to the animals to join him in the boat.
7. In Years 1 and 2, bi-lingual pupils achieve satisfactory standards overall, though their performance in National Curriculum tests at age seven indicates achievements below those found typically by their English-speaking classmates. This was the case for a particular language group which prompted the school to provide additional support in class. The school has not yet, however, made a close analysis of the pupils' achievements in the tests and the support is not always being targeted at the precise needs of these pupils.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils have **good** attitudes to learning and enjoy coming to school. Pupils' behaviour is **good**. Attendance is **unsatisfactory** but the punctuality of the pupils is good. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is free from bullying, racism and other forms of harassment.
- Pupils enjoy very good relationships with each other.
- The school promotes good relationships including racial harmony very well.
- The school deals very effectively with any forms of harassment.
- Attendance is below the national average for similar schools.

Commentary

8. In the majority of lessons, pupils are well behaved and interested in the work. They have very good relationships with each other and with the staff. They show pride in their achievements and are happy to talk about their work with adults. As they move through the school they develop more mature attitudes to support their learning, and the majority start lessons by wanting to learn. They develop good learning habits, share resources and co-operate on tasks effectively. Where the behaviour is less good, teachers do not always display consistent management strategies.
9. The attitudes of pupils with English as an additional language are generally very positive. They make good contributions in class and work well alongside their more experienced English

language-speaking classmates. In early writing activities, their spelling is phonetically plausible, which suggests good listening skills and sensitivity to the sound system of a second language. Occasionally, pupils display a lack of attention and misbehave, which may well be associated with lack of comprehension during long carpet sessions. When fully involved and challenged in their tasks, inappropriate behaviour is less noticeable. Pupils with special educational needs have good attitudes to their learning. They are fully involved and work well in groups when expected to do so, for example in collaborative activities in geography.

10. Attendance has declined over the past academic year and is currently below the national average for similar schools. Attendance rates would be higher if it were not for the significant, authorised absence due to family holidays being taken during term time. The school is aware of this and has plans to improve parents' awareness of the importance of full attendance. Punctuality is generally good with most lessons starting on time.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	6.4
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.0
National data	0.4

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

11. The school is a racially harmonious community where relationships with each other are very strong. Pupils play well together in the playground where games are devised for them and supervised by the older children as well as the adults. Incidents of bullying or racism are rare. When they do occur the school is very quick to deal with them effectively by bringing all parties together to show their strong resistance to such inappropriate behaviour. The vast majority of parents agree that behaviour is good and that their child is not bullied or harassed at school. Inspection findings confirm this perception. There have been no exclusions.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

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

No of pupils on roll
135
13
23
3
2
7
5
1
1
1
2

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

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

12. Provision for pupils' social development is good. A sense of community is fostered by the school, which reflects the school's faith and the way all pupils are valued. Pupils readily accept responsibility for a range of activities, which ensure the smooth running of day-to-day routines. In class, pupils are aware of their responsibilities in established talking and writing partnerships and in collaborative activities across the curriculum. This is beneficial to all, but particularly supportive for bi-lingual pupils who can rehearse the language of the task with more experienced English speakers. Provision for pupils' moral development is good. Their understanding of right and wrong and fairness and honesty are taught through a planned personal, social and health education programme. Pupils are given good opportunities to understand moral issues and concepts. They have been involved in an environmental project which has helped them to understand the importance of recycling unsustainable resources. They also contribute to a number of charities for children less well off than themselves.
13. Pupils' spiritual development is good and their cultural development is satisfactory. They are given time to reflect on the beauty of the world around them through music and story-telling, as well as through prayer. Pupils experience a good range of cultural events, including music, art, story-telling, and visits to places of historical importance. The school does not do enough to prepare its pupils to become informed members of a multi-cultural society. Displays of greetings and labels acknowledge some of the school's linguistic diversity, and the religious education curriculum recognises a multi-faith world. The ethnic minority pupils, however, do not have their own cultural heritage and traditions sufficiently acknowledged in the curriculum.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is **good** and has been maintained since the last inspection. The quality of teaching and learning is **good** overall and the school provides a broad and balanced curriculum.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is **good** overall, and in Years 1 and 2, and **very good** in the Nursery and Reception classes.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching in the Foundation Stage is very good and has a very positive impact on children's progress.
- The teaching in Years 1 and 2 is mostly good and results in a good level of achievement by the end of Year 2.
- The behaviour management procedures are not applied consistently in all classes.
- Teachers need more strategies for providing effectively for pupils with English as an additional language on a day-to-day basis.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 26 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	6	13	6	1	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

14. The very good teaching in the Nursery and Reception classes is the result of very good planning and team work between the three teachers and their support staff. The teaching is strongly based on the Foundation Stage curriculum and is intended to prepare pupils well for the National Curriculum in Year 1. Lessons contain a very appropriate balance between play based activities, child-selected activities and direct teaching. The teachers have worked hard to develop the use of the outdoor facilities and very good links to class work are made. The members of staff have very good relationships with the children and this is effective in encouraging them to try activities and to behave well, learning to play and work together.
15. The good teaching evident throughout Years 1 and 2 supports pupils' learning well and results in the good progress made by pupils leading to the national tests at the end of Year 2. Marking is largely of good quality although it is inconsistent in mathematics. The best lessons have clear learning objectives that are shared with the pupils, helping them to understand what is expected of them. The good quality and knowledgeable teaching assistants provide good support for teachers, and are often well deployed during whole class teaching when they help pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language to remain focused and involved. Good use is made of getting pupils to discuss learning in pairs and this enables them to articulate their thoughts and to consolidate their understanding.
16. Where the teaching is weaker, it is often characterised by inconsistent behaviour management. At times, the small proportion of difficult pupils is not dealt with effectively and this has an impact on their learning. Although a new system for rewarding good behaviour has been recently introduced this is not yet consistently applied. Teachers do not have a sufficiently wide range of strategies to ensure all pupils behave well. Poorer lessons lacked pace and this made it difficult for pupils to stay involved. Methods of involving pupils in their learning were sometimes missed. For example, in a physical education lesson pupils watched others perform but were not asked to evaluate good practice seen.
17. Teachers' planning takes account of special educational needs. The teaching assistants are generally well deployed and this enables them to achieve the planned learning objectives. Communication between assistants and teachers is good. They focus on aspects of the work for which pupils need more practice or assistance in recording at the appropriate level.
18. Given the number of pupils at an intermediate stage of learning English, teachers do not always display sufficient strategies known to be helpful to pupils developing English as an additional language. There are not always enough visual prompts or opportunities for pupils to see the key vocabulary for particular writing tasks written up on the board. The staff handbook does not include guidance on how to support newcomers to English in general classroom teaching. The school employs a part-time English language specialist and a number of classroom assistants with specific language expertise. They give good support to pupils for a number of hours each week. Although useful at times, the practice of withdrawing particular language groups away from the main teaching session means that pupils do not always benefit from working alongside English-speaking classmates who can model appropriate responses to teachers' questions or the repeated refrains of the story as it unfolds. However, the school does do this in some lessons. The school's specialist English language teacher assesses pupils' progress as they acquire English, using the local tracking system. This is sensitive to the smaller steps that pupils make in speaking, reading and writing, and is capable of alerting staff to learning needs, as well as to linguistic competence.

The curriculum

The school offers a broad and balanced curriculum, with an appropriate emphasis on the teaching of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. It affords a very good preparation for junior school. The accommodation is good. There are plenty of resources to support teaching and learning.

Strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is enriched through a good number of school visits, visitors and extra-curricular activities.
- Provision for the pupils' personal, social and health education and citizenship is very good.
- The accommodation is good, though the school is aware of the need to improve access for the disabled.

Commentary

19. The school offers a broad and balanced curriculum, focusing appropriately on the teaching of literacy and numeracy. Planning is satisfactorily based on national guidelines, adapted to meet the needs of the school. Statutory requirements are met for all subjects of the National Curriculum. The teachers plan the work which the pupils will do each term and each week carefully, and this provides good opportunities for the pupils to make progress in their learning as they move through the school. There are good opportunities for the pupils to use their literacy and numeracy skills in other lessons. The use of ICT across the curriculum has improved significantly since the previous inspection. Some music and ICT is taught by part-time specialist teachers and there are regular opportunities for all the pupils in Year 2 to learn to play the recorder.
20. The school regularly reviews the curriculum, in order to see where improvements or innovations might be made. Phonic and spelling programmes are used effectively in all year groups and are proving successful in motivating the pupils and in raising standards in literacy. The school makes use of other strategies, such as 'brain gym' and accelerated learning, in order to raise standards. During 'themed' weeks, learning is focused on specific topics, such as safety or recycling.
21. The curriculum is enriched by worthwhile visits. Visiting musicians, theatre groups and fire-fighters enhance learning. During the summer term, there are clubs for football and short tennis. About 14 pupils currently attend an after-school French club. There are opportunities for pupils in Year 2 to be members of the school choir. A 'Rainbows' club provides valuable support for pupils experiencing personal difficulties. Pupils in Year 2 have the opportunity to participate in a computer club at the junior school.
22. There are sufficient teaching and non-teaching staff to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum and to support the administrative side of school life. Storage space is limited, but overall the accommodation is good. There is no disabled toilet in the main building and access to parts of the building would be difficult for pupils with severe mobility problems. The school has plans to address this. The Nursery occupies a separate building, which affords good accommodation for these children, with its own play area. There are plenty of good quality resources to support teaching and learning in all subjects. There is a small, easily accessible library, with an adequate range of good quality fiction and non-fiction books.

Care, guidance and support

Provision for pupils' care, guidance and support are **very good**. The school involves pupils well in consultation about school improvement.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils work and play in a very healthy and safe environment.
- Pupils enjoy a very trusting relationship with at least one adult in the school.
- Pupils have very good access to well-informed support, advice and guidance.
- The induction arrangements for children joining the school, particularly the Nursery is very good.

- The school council is an effective way for obtaining pupils' views about school improvement.

Commentary

23. Pupils are very well supported by the very good relationships that exist between them and the adults in the school. The induction process for new pupils is of a very high quality and leads to most children being able to settle quickly into school routines. Parents, almost without exception, agree with this and believe that the members of staff encourage their children to become mature and independent.
24. There are suitable policies for health and safety and child protection that members of staff implement very effectively. A diligent caretaker keeps the school in a very clean condition. The school is following the Healthy Schools Initiative and at least half the school population enjoys a freshly cooked, nutritious school dinner.
25. Pupils have very good access to well-informed support, advice and guidance. Their achievements and personal development are well monitored and reported upon. Dealing with bereavement is an example of procedures that the school has developed to help those affected by it. Pupils with special educational needs are quickly identified and a programme of support is planned. Occasionally pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties are not fully involved in lessons because of some inconsistency in teachers' behaviour management. Targets in pupils' individual education plans are reviewed regularly to make sure pupils are achieving to an appropriate level.
26. The school considers pupils' views, mostly through the school council. The school rules were devised as a result of such consultation. Pupils approve of this and feel they are valued and listened to.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's links with parents and other schools and colleges are **very good**. There are good links with the community.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality and quantity of information supplied to parents are very good.
- The school deals very effectively with any concerns or complaints that parents may have.
- The links enjoyed by the school with neighbouring schools and colleges are very strong.
- Consultation with parents and acting on their views are good.

Commentary

27. Parents consider their children receive a good education and are highly satisfied with what the school does and what it achieves. They consider the school is well led and managed. The school consults regularly with parents about ways in which the school can be improved. The school, the governors and the parent-teacher association send newsletters at regular intervals, keeping parents fully informed of events and seeking their help and suggestions. Annual reports are of high quality and contain targets for improvement for each child. A good number of parents respond by helping in the school with various activities including listening to children read.
28. Any concerns or complaints that parents might have are dealt with quickly and effectively. Members of staff are accessible to parents at the beginning and end of each day and this is appreciated by parents who make good use of it. This is one reason why the partnership between school and parents is very strong.
29. There are student teachers and Nursery nurses regularly working in the school. The relationship between the school and their colleges and universities is very effective. There are

very close links with the junior school. There is a joint parent-teacher association that is very active and raises considerable amounts of money that are shared between the two schools. The school development plan highlights areas common to both schools, which creates opportunities for joint staff training and the sharing of expertise and knowledge.

30. The school has good links in the community, particularly the Church. The school knows the locality well but has not yet developed the use of the school as a community facility to the greatest extent possible, or its partners as critical friends.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The governance of the school is **excellent** and the governing body have a very strong understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The leadership of the headteacher and that in the Foundation Stage is **very good**. The school is well managed and run.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The governing body are very well organised and have an excellent understanding of the work of the school.
- The headteacher's leadership is very good and has a clear education purpose.
- The Foundation Stage is very well led and managed.
- The leadership of subjects is good.

Commentary

31. The governing body is exceptionally well organised and involved in the work of the school. The chair provides very effective leadership for the governors and they have a very clear understanding of the current issues facing the school, including the latest initiative to ensure a good work-life balance for staff. Their work is enhanced by the close ties with the junior school, and the sharing of aspects of their work through joint committees. The methods of keeping minutes and passing information around the governing body are excellent and ensure that all governors are very well informed and communication is very effective. They also produce a termly newsletter for parents to keep all involved in the school aware of their work. The governor of the month arrangement ensures that all governors have a good opportunity to plan for and to spend time in school to become very aware of how well the school works on a day-to-day basis. The governors' training needs are very well planned and provided for, and very good use is made of e-mail for communication among governors.
32. The headteacher has worked hard since her appointment to maintain the very good aspects of the school's work and to raise standards still further. She has a clear vision for the future development of the school and appropriately high expectations of the pupils and staff. The school's self evaluation is good and target setting is based appropriately on pupils' prior attainment. The targets are analysed during the year to see how many pupils are reaching or falling behind in achieving their targets, and this provides teachers with specific teaching points for particular groups of pupils. The performance management of teaching staff is in place, and the school plans to extend this to non-teaching staff in the near future.
33. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are very good. The curriculum is well planned and appropriate, and the staff work well together to ensure the needs of the children are met. Subject leadership is good and staff work hard to support each other. Subject co-ordinators monitor their subjects well through observations, scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning. The school has a clear system for this work and an agreed format for feedback enabling colleagues, as well as governors, to act as critical friends in an appropriate way.

34. Governors have appointed a well-trained and experienced special educational needs co-ordinator, who is also the inclusion co-ordinator for the school. She ensures that individual education plans are written and appropriate targets set. Pupils' progress is discussed each half term with the class teacher. Careful consideration is given to specific resources and their impact on pupils' progress is monitored. Teaching assistants are trained to support pupils with special educational needs, including the use of "booster" strategies for lower attaining pupils. The co-ordinator is aware that the school does not comply with regulations relating to accessibility for wheel-chair users. The school has developed a wheel-chair policy, and until full accessibility is achieved, have made special arrangements that any pupil who requires a wheel-chair will be located, as far as possible, in classrooms which are accessible.
35. A part-time English language specialist, funded by government grant, is employed for two days a week. She takes responsibility for tracking the progress of bi-lingual pupils and giving advice on how to ensure that all pupils are given full access to the National Curriculum. She collaborates with classteachers and sets appropriate targets for bi-lingual pupils' achievement. The needs of bi-lingual pupils are not discussed regularly enough at senior management meetings or reflected sufficiently in the school's documentation. The school does have a separate development plan for bi-lingual pupils in line with local authority policy.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	571,691	Balance from previous year	61,365
Total expenditure	505,101	Balance carried forward to the next	117,595
Expenditure per pupil	2,452		

36. The school had a large balance carried forward to this year. This was due to planned building and premises improvements have been delayed by other factors. In addition, the money is intended to support improvements to toilets, the hall windows, physical education equipment, outdoor facilities and ICT resources. Staffing expertise has also been improved through the provision of part time specialist staff in music and ICT, and this has had a positive impact on standards. The school has responded well to the recommendations made by a recent audit report. The expenditure per pupil is high, but the school provides good value for money. The governing body works hard to ensure that the school provides best value in its work.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

37. The overall provision for the Foundation Stage is very good. The accommodation is bright, spacious and used very effectively to provide a range of experiences for children. The outdoor areas are used appropriately for well-planned activities, especially those which develop pupils' social and physical skills. The starts of sessions provide very good opportunities for parents to settle children and talk to staff. Children are very familiar with routines and quickly begin one of the prepared activities. These sessions are effective in creating the appropriate learning ethos and this has a positive impact on the children's learning. Induction arrangements are good and praised by the parents.
38. The quality of the teaching is very good overall. The support staff work very effectively in support of the teachers and they have a very positive impact on children's learning. They are well informed, well deployed and the communication between the staff is very good. The planning is good and the teachers plan together to ensure good continuity between Nursery and Reception classes. The assessment of pupils' progress is very good and used well to ensure individual needs are met. Overall, the provision is very good at preparing children for the next stage of their education.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children quickly learn the routines in both classes and develop very good relationships.
- The teaching is very good and all adults involved have a good awareness of the children's needs.

Commentary

39. In all lessons in both classes, members of staff ensure that rules are followed and children develop good learning skills. In the Nursery, the very good teaching results in a high level of progress as children learn to work and play together, to share and take turns and to develop pride in their work. They are happy to show their work and share it with an adult.
40. In Reception, a very good range of activities is provided enabling children to work and play together. This builds well on their work in the Nursery. They are given very good opportunities to demonstrate independence when they select activities from a given number, and they use a good self-registering technique. In groups, children worked to act out aspects of the text from their literacy lessons using the outdoors in an imaginative way.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The basic skills of reading and writing are well taught.
- The children enjoy reading and looking at books.

Commentary

41. Children's reading skills are developing well. The recent introduction of a new phonic scheme is helping children become familiar with sounds. They have a good understanding of how books work and are familiar with terms such as author and illustrator. The home-school reading records show that parents and staff regularly hear children read. In the Reception class, the teacher introduces aspects of the National Literacy Strategy appropriately given the ages of the children. The linking of the text used for whole class reading to other aspects of the curriculum is excellent, and when a character from the story appeared in person to set a challenge for the children to undertake in a science activity it helped bring the text to life and to engage all children very effectively. More able children in Reception have already developed a good understanding of many of the conventions of reading and one girl, for example, was able to point out speech marks in the text without prompting.
42. There are many opportunities and activities provided that encourage writing. Sometimes these use role-play as inspiration, as when two children in the Nursery wrote down details of a trip abroad at the airport check-in desk. Basic skills are taught and practised regularly and the teachers model writing styles well. The writing of letters is well linked to the learning of the sounds they make. In the Reception class, the use of an imaginative task, producing a book for an absent teacher to read, got all children enthused about trying to write complete sentences. Children with English as an additional language are well supported in their writing tasks and the teacher links the letters well to the phonic scheme used in the school.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **very good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The planning ensures that the range of activities is based appropriately on the main theme for a lesson.
- The children make very good progress in both classes and their achievement is good.
- Computer activities are used well to develop and extend pupils' skills.

Commentary

43. In the Nursery class, the teaching is very well matched to children's needs. More able children are able to recognise numbers to 10. The teacher uses deliberate mistakes well and the children enjoy correcting her.
44. In the Reception class, children have many opportunities to become familiar with counting and calculating. In one very good lesson, they used the characters from the book they were reading in literacy to work out ordinal numbers from first to eleventh. They compared the weights of toy animals to decide lightest and heaviest. In a very good use of playground markings, children threw dice to move animals on a number line, and then used the toss of a coin to move one more or one less.
45. The children make very good progress in counting and calculating. For example, in the Nursery class they learn to count objects to five, while in Reception they are counting to 20 and working out one more or one less than a number. Children have good opportunities to use a range of software designed to extend their number recognition and counting skills, and this is often a popular choice at the start of the day, particularly for the higher attaining children. In Reception, children can order bears by size and are familiar with two-dimensional shapes.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are provided with many very good opportunities to learn about the world around them.
- The use of ICT has developed well since the last inspection.

Commentary

46. In the Nursery class, children develop a very good understanding of some of the properties of air. The members of staff have produced very good resources to show how air acts in a range of ways and this causes much interest and excitement. This results in children developing early scientific skills such as observing and commenting on what they see. They are learning the names and order of the seasons and the months. In the Reception class, a story was used very effectively to introduce an investigation into waterproofing. The story was brought to life by the role play of a teaching assistant who asked children to find out what materials would be best for keeping her dry when she fell into the river. Children made very sensible predictions before testing the materials for both waterproofing and strength.
47. In both classes, the expertise of a teaching assistant is used well to introduce children to a programmable robot, and by the end of the lesson they have learned to clear its memory and to send it the correct distance to a target. They use computers in Reception to create Diwali patterns, learning about symmetry in the process.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The members of staff are developing very good use of the outdoor facilities.

Commentary

48. In both classes, children have a wide range of opportunities to use different tools and media, which they do with growing control. In the Nursery class, the developing use of the outdoor area is providing children with very good opportunities to develop a range of physical skills and to play and work imaginatively as well as learn about the world around them. For example, they made and hung out bird cakes to attract more birds to the garden. In the Reception class, the outside facilities are used very effectively to develop pupils' physical skills. They have opportunities to play games with large apparatus that develop their mathematical skills. Imaginative resources, such as the boat made by a classroom assistant, provide very good opportunities for role play and co-operation within the group, as well as developing children's speaking and listening skills.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The creative work is well linked to other aspects of the curriculum.

Commentary

49. Very good links are made between the main theme of the week and aspects of the pupils' creative work. In the Nursery, they paint and make collages of balloons as part of the air topic. In a physical education session, they respond to signals by inflating or deflating like a balloon. Very good use is made of parent helpers with practical and creative activities, such as the creating of a nativity scene using cutting, sticking and colouring skills. Reception children have a range of role play opportunities, as well as many activities requiring them to use their artistic or musical skills. They produce good observational drawings of fruit that show a high standard of control and awareness of the world around them.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1

ENGLISH

The provision for English is **good**. All aspects of the subject are taught well, and pupils make good and sometimes very good progress. This is a similar picture to the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The standards achieved are consistently above or well above average.
- The subject is well resourced.
- The teaching is sometimes slow paced.
- There is in some lessons a lack of awareness of the needs of bi-lingual pupils.

Commentary

50. Teacher assessments show that standards in speaking and listening are below average and that the pupils have below average achievement. Inspection evidence suggests a more positive picture, with pupils talking with confidence and making meanings clear. Standards in reading and writing are consistently above average compared to schools nationally, and in writing results are well above average. When compared with similar schools, standards are also well above average for reading and writing. In reading, almost half of pupils reach higher than expected standards, and a third do so in writing. High standards have been maintained since the last inspection, with the trend of improvement broadly matching the national picture.
51. Pupils listen well in class and talk with confidence about their family life and school achievements. Bi-lingual pupils are also keen to talk but sometimes display below average competence in describing particular ideas. For example, in one Year 2 class one bi-lingual pupil found it very difficult to name or describe the phenomenon of snow in the story presented in the English lesson. Pupils are expected to sit for long periods listening to teachers.
52. Current standards in reading are in line with those expected. In Year 2, pupils pay good attention to punctuation to help them bring more expression and demonstrate comprehension beyond the literal. Pupils use a good range of appropriate strategies to identify unfamiliar words. This suggests good teaching of basic skills.
53. Standards in writing are good overall. In Year 2, handwriting is of a very high standard, with many pupils displaying a well joined flowing hand. This facilitates work in class where pupils can focus on ideas rather than on learning to write. Spelling and punctuation are not as well developed, with pupils not always transferring their taught literacy skills to other areas of the curriculum.
54. Teaching and learning are satisfactory, with some teaching that is good. With so many bi-lingual pupils in each class, some of whom are only at an intermediate stage, the school needs

to raise everyone's awareness of the needs of bi-lingual pupils so that well developed approaches and strategies can be demonstrated in every lesson. Some staff do not use visual prompts, exploit whiteboards effectively enough, or model ways of recording tasks. Teachers do not always enlarge texts so that they can draw pupils' attention to particular features of the writing or to demonstrate vocabulary type. In effective Year 2 lessons, however, pupils investigated the way an author and illustrator had collaborated to produce a story about Sam, the farmer's son, and Bess, his sheepdog. The second story was suggested by a sequence of pictures which mirrored what was happening in the first. Pupils were alert to the developments of each story and the links the illustrator had made as the two stories unfolded. They were aware of the detail, compared events, and made links between the emotional responses in both stories, with good judgement. This was an excellent choice of resource. Sometimes over-long sessions sitting on the carpet lead to poor behaviour. This was more evident when there were not appropriate resources to hold the pupils' attention.

55. Teachers make good use of guided reading with small groups of pupils. Higher attaining pupils are not always encouraged to move beyond the limits of a lesson to explore ideas for themselves. For example, one pupil picked up the links between the emotional responses in both the story and its sub-plot. The teacher did not allow her to pursue this area of interest because it had not been built into the lesson plan.
56. Although the overall provision is good, there is not enough awareness of what the significant percentage of pupils with English as an additional language should make to teaching and learning styles. While bilingual members of staff make valuable contributions in lessons, more thought needs to be directed to how they can help targeted pupils achieve the learning objective.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

57. Pupils are given good opportunities to work together in small groups on collaborative activities. All classes have a listening area where pupils can listen to tapes of stories and songs. Pupils transfer their good writing skills across the other subjects of the curriculum where teachers' marking focuses on subject knowledge and on presentation skills.

MATHEMATICS

Provision for mathematics is **good**.

Strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average.
- Teaching and learning are good which enables all the pupils to achieve well.
- There is a strong focus on developing the pupils' mental calculations.
- Leadership and management are good and this has a positive impact on standards.

Commentary

58. In Year 2, standards are above average, and these have been maintained since the previous inspection. In the most recent national tests for pupils in Year 2, standards were well above average compared with schools nationally and with similar schools. All the pupils achieved the expected level of attainment and almost half of them achieved the higher level. The pupils achieve well. Those with special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language, make good progress. There is evidence to show that, on entry to the school, the boys have much weaker mathematical development than the girls and so this represents very good progress.

59. By Year 2, the pupils show quick mental recall of addition and subtraction facts to 10 and beyond. Higher attainers can quickly double two-digit numbers. The pupils order numbers to 100 and they have a good understanding of place value in two-digit numbers. They solve simple problems involving money and they know which coins to use to make up sums of money. They understand the idea of 'half' as being two equal parts. The pupils recognise and name common two and three-dimensional shapes and they describe some of the properties of these shapes. They represent data, such as favourite fruits and shoe sizes, by means of accurate block graphs, bar charts and pictograms, sometimes using computers for this.
60. Teaching and learning are good, which helps the pupils to achieve well. The teachers plan their lessons carefully and they place a strong emphasis on developing the pupils' mental calculations. They employ a variety of strategies, including 'brain gym', to achieve this. Expectations are high and higher attaining pupils are appropriately challenged. The teachers make effective use of resources, such as practical apparatus and computers, to aid learning. In a Year 1 lesson, the teacher made effective use of a 'Santa's Journey' board game, which helped the pupils to tell time to the hour and half hour. Teaching assistants provide valuable support, which enables lower attainers and those with special educational needs to achieve well. All pupils are fully included in learning. The teachers match work well to pupils' varying needs, both through questioning in oral sessions and through written group work. The teachers mark pupils' work regularly and positively, though the quality of marking is variable. Ongoing assessment in lessons is good, with plenary sessions used well to consolidate learning and to set weekly homework. At times, pupils spend too long sitting on the carpet, with the result that their concentration begins to wane.
61. Leadership and management are good and this is having a positive impact on standards. The coordinator monitors the quality of planning, teaching and samples of pupils' work. She analyses the results of national tests, in order to highlight areas of relative weakness in performance. There are good procedures for assessing and tracking pupils' progress and good use is made of assessment information to plan the next stages in learning. There are plenty of resources to support learning. Practical mathematics plays an important part in the school's annual bring-and-buy sale.

Mathematics across the curriculum

62. The pupils use their numeracy and data handling skills well in other subjects. As part of a science investigation, for example, they recorded the amount of stretch shown by different socks. Good opportunities for using mental numeracy skills are found in registration sessions, when pupils are asked to work out the numbers present or absent.

SCIENCE

Provision for science is **good**.

Strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good, enabling all pupils to achieve well.
- There is a clear focus on developing the pupils' skills of practical scientific inquiry.
- Leadership and management are good and this has a positive impact on standards.
- Standards are above average.

Commentary

63. By Year 2, standards are above average and have largely been maintained since the last inspection when they were judged to be well above average. The pupils achieve well. Those with special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language, are making good progress. There is no significant difference in attainment between boys and girls.

64. By Year 2, the pupils understand that light comes from the sun and other sources. They investigate the nature of shadows and which materials allow light to pass through. They know that some materials occur naturally, while others are man-made. The pupils have a basic understanding of how humans hear and they investigate how sound levels decrease with distance from the source. The pupils make good use of their literacy, mathematical and computer skills in recording the results of investigations in writing, in Venn and Carroll diagrams and in bar charts. They use computers to label the main parts of a plant and to illustrate the life cycles of a caterpillar and a frog.
65. Teaching and learning are good, enabling the pupils to achieve well. The teachers provide plenty of opportunities for the pupils to undertake practical investigations, encouraging the pupils to make sensible predictions, to ensure that testing is fair and to observe carefully. In a Year 2 lesson, this helped the pupils as they investigated the melting of ice. The teacher emphasised the need to record findings accurately. The teachers try to make the teaching of science relevant to everyday situations. The lesson quoted above concluded with useful references to the use of salt to de-ice roads in winter and to the insulating properties of some materials. The teachers make useful links with other subjects whenever possible. In a Year 1 lesson, the teacher related learning about the need for a healthy diet to the story of 'The Hungry Caterpillar' and this succeeded in holding the pupils' interest from the outset. The teachers make good use of resources, including computers, in order to enhance learning. In a lesson for pupils in Year 2, the teacher made very effective use of a digital microscope, which enabled the pupils to see in detail how salt helps to melt ice.
66. Leadership and management are good and this is having a positive impact on standards. The coordinator monitors the quality of planning, teaching and samples of pupils' work. There are good procedures for assessing pupils' progress. Information gained from assessment is used well to plan subsequent learning. There are adequate resources to support learning. The curriculum is enriched by visits to museums, zoos, wildlife parks and local farms, and by an annual science week.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The provision, resources and standards have improved greatly since the last inspection.
- Pupils use a good range of software in different subjects.
- The subject leadership is very good.

Commentary

67. Resources have been much improved and updated since the last inspection. Pupils now have much more access to computers and other hardware. They learn to program robots, and to use a digital camera and microscope. They can access taped stories and are developing their confidence when using a keyboard. Teachers' personal expertise has improved although they do not yet make full use of computers for planning and assessment purposes. The recent nature of much of this work means that in some activities the school has not yet developed secure planning that builds progressively on pupils' prior attainment. There is a good focus on pupils' keyboard skills and they are encouraged to learn to type with both hands as well as use the mouse.
68. The teaching is good and the marking of pupils' work includes very good annotations to show the purpose of the activity. Assessment of progress is good and shows clearly, for example,

how well pupils know how to use the different tools in a piece of software. In Year 2, pupils are given good research tasks that require them to search a CD for information.

69. The staffing has improved to include a part time teacher and a learning support assistant who both offer a level of expertise that was lacking in the past. In the summer term, older pupils have the opportunity to attend computer sessions in the junior school, partly to help with transfer arrangements but also to extend and develop their ICT skills further.
70. The subject co-ordination has been very effective in making the improvement evident since the last inspection. A good action plan was devised and this has been successfully completed although the school has identified further appropriate priorities to ensure that the improvement continues. The governing body have very effectively monitored the improvements made to ensure the action plan was carried out and that the resources are used in a way that provides value for money.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

71. The computers are used across a range of subjects to present findings. In science, for example, software is used to create bar graphs of the different materials from which a set of objects are made. In mathematics, more bar graphs are used to show pupils' favourite fruits. In art and design, very effective use is made of software to create pictures in the style of Mondrian, and to produce imaginative compositions on a variety of themes.

HUMANITIES

Geography

Provision in geography is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There has been a good level of improvement since the last inspection.
- The school makes good use of fieldwork.
- There is good use of ICT to support learning.
- The school develops pupils' map reading skills well.

Commentary

72. Standards in geography are good overall, which is an improvement since the last inspection. During the inspection, the focus of geography lessons was on the crucial skill of recording data from fieldwork and map-work. In Year 1, pupils used digital photographs of an environmental trip to retrace their journey and to draw up a map of their local environment. In Year 2 the skills were further developed to use conventional symbols and a map key to record their own fieldwork, focusing particularly on land use and places where people work. This clear development indicates that curriculum planning allows pupils to develop skills and knowledge progressively.
73. The teaching of geography is generally good, with good use of field study data and information and communication technology to record information about the local environment at an appropriate level for the pupils' age. Teachers encourage collaboration which allows pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs to be involved fully. Cutting and pasting digital photographs onto maps provided good visual prompts to help pupils describe the detail of what they had found out on their visit.
74. Pupils' attitude to the subject is good. They use the resources well, and recall detail of the walk with confidence, for example, in Year 1 classifying the areas that are safe to play in and

those which are not, with good judgement. They identified criteria to help them decide if an area is safe or not.

75. Leadership in geography is strong. The school has looked at the last report and produced an action plan to improve provision. The co-ordinator monitors planning. All aspects of the programme of study for geography are covered in the two-year programme. Not enough opportunity is made of the knowledge pupils possess, both from personal experience and from extended family associations, of countries all over the world. Good use is made of sending bears on family trips and holidays and this does extend pupils' understanding of other places.

History

76. During the week of inspection, no history lessons were taught, which is consistent with the school's curriculum plan for a half-termly focus for each of history and geography. Curriculum planning includes appropriate cover of all strands of the programme of study for history, with a particular emphasis on developing a sense of chronology. The school is also helping pupils to understand the importance of documentary and material evidence to build up a picture of the past. For example, they have seen how extracts from the diary of Samuel Pepys are a first-hand account of the great fire of London. Work in books indicates that pupils are coming to understand the sequence of events in English history, for example that the great fire of London followed the plague and led to the rebuilding of the city. The school is building up a collection of artefacts to allow pupils to compare and contrast ways of life from different periods in history.
77. The co-ordinator has introduced a nationally approved scheme of work, which allows her to check that all strands of the subject are being taught in each two-year cycle. Assessment is made by checking the pupils' work against the key learning objectives in the National Curriculum programme of study.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

78. Only one lesson in **music** was observed during the inspection, alongside singing in assembly. It is not possible to evaluate provision and standards securely but the evidence available points to standards that are good. The school employs a specialist music teacher for one day a week and this is effective in supporting pupils' progress and providing the school with an increased level of expertise. Year 1 pupils sing tunefully and keep a rhythm accurately, when chanting in two parts. In assembly, all pupils sing well, and opportunity is taken to introduce pupils to a range of different musical styles. For example, during a service for the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, the headteacher played a version of 'Ave Maria'.
79. Only two lessons were observed in **physical education** during the inspection. Overall, the standards observed were above those expected and the provision is good. The Year 2 pupils demonstrated a good level of skill in balancing and creating sequences of balances and movements between them. They are able to transfer these skills from floor work to using the apparatus. They work quietly and safely. In Year 1, pupils showed a good awareness of others as they moved around the hall in a range of different ways. They devised ways of rolling and balancing, eventually extending this work into the creation of a sequence of movements.
80. One **art and design** lesson was observed during the inspection. However, the scrutiny of children's work and the displays around the school show that the standards are above those expected for the ages of the pupils. In the good lesson observed, pupils were making imaginative Christmas cards, using a range of design, cutting and folding skills. Throughout the school good three-dimensional work using clay is evident. In Year 1, very good work in the style of Andy Goldsworthy is displayed through the good use of digital photographs. In **design and technology**, Year 2 pupils learn to design a pattern on paper which they then transfer by sewing onto binka material ready to mount on card. Their sewing skills are good and they show care and attention to detail, and a real pride in their work.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

81. There is very good provision coordinated by the headteacher. There are opportunities in assemblies and in weekly circle times for the pupils to talk about issues which are important to them. Here, the pupils can develop self-esteem and confidence. The teachers encourage the pupils to show responsibility as often as possible, as illustrated by the school council and effective playground helpers. The pupils are encouraged to think about environmental conservation, not least through a recent, very successful 'recycling week'. They think about people less fortunate than themselves by supporting various charities. The pupils learn about the need for a balanced diet as part of a healthy lifestyle. A visitor recently spoke to pupils in Year 2 about this and the school has enrolled on the Healthy Schools programme. The pupils have access to fresh fruit every morning. There are clear policies for sex and drugs education. The pupils learn about physical development and the importance of family life. They are taught about the dangers of drugs misuse and smoking. They learn that medicines are drugs which have to be taken very carefully under adult supervision.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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

