

# INSPECTION REPORT

**ST MARY IMMACULATE CATHOLIC PRIMARY  
SCHOOL**

Warwick

LEA area: Warwickshire

Unique reference number: 125717

Headteacher: Mr R Gargan

Lead inspector: Mrs V Ward

Dates of inspection: 21 – 24 June 2004

Inspection number: 264891

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 -11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	83
School address:	Wathen Road Warwick Warwickshire
Postcode:	CV34 5BG
Telephone number:	01926 493959
Fax number:	01926 410592
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Very Reverend Canon E. M. Stewart

Date of previous inspection: 18-19 March 2002

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is situated in the town of Warwick. The pupils come from a wide geographical area and their social backgrounds are very varied. There are currently 83 pupils on roll, with slightly more girls than boys. Almost all of the pupils are white British, a small percentage being of European and Asian background. Three pupils are currently at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. Children are admitted to the school in the September following their fourth birthday. Their attainment on entry is below average. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals (37.5 percent) is well above average. Eighteen percent of the pupils are identified as having special educational needs, a figure that is similar to the national average. Two pupils currently have statements of special educational need. This is more than in most schools. A very small percentage of pupils either joined or left the school during the course of the previous school year. The school has been through a very difficult period, with several changes of staffing and leadership, but is now much more settled. A private nursery uses part of the school building each morning.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
19028	Vanessa Ward	Lead inspector	English, Foundation Stage, History, Geography, Music, English as an additional language
13526	Richard Barnard	Lay inspector	
32354	Vicky Baynes	Team inspector	Mathematics, Science, Special educational needs
8339	Hugh Protherough	Team inspector	Information and communication technology, Art and design, Design and technology, Physical education

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**The effectiveness of the school is satisfactory, and is improving.** The headteacher's good leadership, well supported by the staff and governors, has brought about recent progress. The achievement of the pupils is satisfactory. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall with some significant strengths, particularly in Years 3 to 6. The school has a caring ethos. Parental perceptions have improved of late and the pupils enjoy coming to school. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The headteacher, staff and governors work with determination and increasing effectiveness to raise achievement.
- Standards in English and mathematics, while beginning to improve, are below average overall in Years 1 to 6.
- Insufficient emphasis is given to teaching some aspects of the science curriculum and standards are lower than they should be.
- The school takes good care of its pupils and enhances their learning through extra-curricular clubs and additional arts, sports and music activities.
- Some aspects of the management of special educational needs are unsatisfactory and this sometimes reduces the pupils' achievement.
- The vast majority of the pupils, and especially those in Years 3 to 6, behave well and have positive attitudes to work.
- Links with the church and the wider community are strong and add value to the pupils' learning.

Since it was last inspected in May 2002, the school has been through a very unsettled period, which has hindered its progress. With greater stability in recent months, the pace of improvement has now increased and the staff are working with total commitment to raising the pupils' achievement and standards as rapidly as possible. Improvements have been made in several areas, and these are making the school more effective. They include the pupils' attendance, their cultural development and their attitudes and behaviour, especially in Years 3 to 6. The school has worked hard to improve the weaknesses identified at the previous inspection. Standards are now rising in areas where there has been particular focus, such as writing, reading and numeracy. Although a start has been made, more remains to be done to improve teaching in the foundation subjects and to develop the roles of the subject coordinators.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average  
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2. There were six pupils in Year 6 in 2003.*

Throughout the school, **the pupils' achievement is satisfactory.** As year groups are small, care should be taken when interpreting the school's results. Similar caution is needed when measuring the value the school adds between Years 2 and 6 in comparison with similar schools. The E\* means that the results were in the lowest five percent nationally. Results are expected to be below average again this year because half of the pupils in Year 6 have special educational needs. However, in other year groups, standards are rising and are closer to average in English and mathematics. This is because of the school's particular focus on teaching and learning in these subjects. Standards in science are below average in Years 1 to 6 because of the lack of depth of coverage. In Years 1 and 2, standards in reading, writing and mathematics dipped in the 2003 tests and are generally below average in 2004. This is mainly because of the relatively high ratio of pupils with special educational needs to those who are capable of higher attainment. When compared with similar schools, results in Year 2 have been at least average over the past three years. In the reception class, about half of the children reach the expected goals in the six areas of learning. Throughout the school, there is no significant variation in achievement among different groups of pupils considered by age, gender, ethnicity or background. There is some variation in achievement in relation to pupils' abilities, because provision for pupils with special educational needs is inconsistent.

**The pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good.** The vast majority of pupils, especially those in Years 3 to 6, behave well and show positive attitudes to school. They are enthusiastic and are motivated to learn.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall,** with some good features. Teaching is good overall in Years 3 to 6. The teachers use good questioning techniques which stimulate the pupils' thinking and ensure that all of the pupils are included. The pupils talk intelligently about their work and know what they do well and in which areas they need to improve. The curriculum is greatly enriched by a good range of extra-curricular and additional activities. This contributes to the pupils' positive attitudes. Procedures for ensuring the pupils' care, health and safety are good, and they support the pupils' learning well. The pupils are now actively involved in the work of the school and in helping to shape decisions. The partnership with parents is satisfactory and the school is taking steps to build on this. Links with the local community are good and are used well to enhance the pupils' learning.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management are satisfactory overall.** The headteacher provides good leadership. He has a strong sense of purpose and determination to bring about school improvement. The results of his actions in the few months since he was appointed are now beginning to move the school forward. The work of the governing body is good and the governors ensure that all statutory requirements are met. They are well informed and are suitably involved in school improvement. Management, including that of the school's finances, is satisfactory. The leadership of the coordinators has improved but needs further development.

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

Most pupils speak positively about their school and feel that they are well cared for and valued. A large majority of parents express positive views about the school, and the inspection findings support these views. A significant minority of parents requested more information about how their children are progressing. The findings of the inspection confirm this need and the school is taking measures to improve the quality of the information given to parents.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Continue to implement the planned improvements to raise standards in all subjects, but especially in English and mathematics;
- Ensure that all aspects of the science curriculum are covered effectively and that standards are raised;
- Improve the process for setting targets and monitoring progress towards them, for pupils with special educational needs and raise their achievement.



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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

Achievement<sup>1</sup> is satisfactory throughout the school and shows no significant variation according to pupils' gender, ethnicity or background. There is some variation in pupils' achievement in relation to their abilities. Below average on entry to the reception class, approximately half of the children meet the expected goals in the areas of learning by the beginning of Year 1. At the end of Year 2, standards are below average in English, mathematics and science. At the end of Year 6, standards are below average in mathematics and science and well below average in English.

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

- Standards are beginning to rise in English and mathematics, particularly in Years 1, 3, 4 and 5, because of the success of the school's initiatives to bring about improvement
- Standards in science are lower than they should be because of weaknesses in the curriculum and teaching
- The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is sometimes unsatisfactory
- Achievement is improving because of the more detailed monitoring of each pupil's progress and the use of the data to influence teaching and learning

#### **Commentary**

1. Achievement in Years 2 and 6 is satisfactory and is improving. In Year 2 and Year 6, standards in the national tests have fluctuated during recent years. This is mainly because of swings in the proportion of pupils who are higher attainers and those with special educational needs. As year groups are small, these proportions have a significant impact on the statistics. Overall, in recent years, the pattern of improvement in the school's results in both Years 2 and 6 has been below that found in other schools. When compared with similar schools, results in Year 2 for the past three years have often been average or above. In Year 6, they have been almost consistently well below average. However, recent strategies to raise standards are beginning to take effect. The school's focus on its weaker areas is yielding positive benefits. Changes to the ways in which reading, writing and mathematical calculation are taught are increasing the pupils' interest in their learning and consequently raising their achievement.
2. In Year 6, half of the pupils have special educational needs and standards in English are well below average. However, the school's strategies to raise attainment in English and mathematics are improving standards in Years 3 to 5. Standards in science are below average because there are gaps in the provision.
36. In Year 2, a significant proportion of pupils have special educational needs. As a consequence, standards are currently below average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Recent strategies to raise attainment in reading, writing and number calculation are beginning to have an impact and standards are currently higher for the pupils in Year 1.

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<sup>1</sup> *Achievement is a measure of how well pupils are doing, taking their progress and their capability into account.*

37. The initial assessments show that on entry the children's attainment is below average. Their achievement is at least satisfactory and, by the end of the reception year, records show approximately half of the children attain the expected goals in personal, social and emotional development, mathematical, physical and creative development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. In communication, language and literacy, although the teaching is often good, just under half of the children reach the expected goals in the reading and writing aspects of this area of learning.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	14.4 (11.8)	15.7(15.8)
Writing	13.6 (13.5)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	16.5 (17.0)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 14 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year. As the numbers in these year groups are small, care is needed in interpreting these figures.*

*Test results for Year 6 are not included because there were only 6 pupils in the year group.*

38. In Years 1 to 6, the pupils do not achieve as well as they should in science. This is because there is too little practical, investigative work, combined with an imbalance in the emphasis on different aspects of science. By Year 6 there are gaps in the pupils' knowledge and understanding of scientific facts and processes. The school has already identified weaknesses in its monitoring and assessment of the pupils' achievement in science and is taking steps to improve these areas.

39. The school's analysis of its results, combined with frequent monitoring of the pupils' achievement and subsequent action to bring about improvement, is beginning to raise standards. Alterations to teachers' planning, such as the selection of work that much more closely builds on each pupil's previous learning, are making learning more effective. However, this is not yet consistent practice across all lessons in all subjects. Consequently, there are occasions when higher attaining pupils and pupils with special educational needs, in particular, do not achieve as well as they could.

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

Pupils have satisfactory attitudes to school and behave well in lessons and around the school. Their personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- In Years 3 to 6, the pupils show good attitudes to school and behave well
- A minority of pupils in Years 1 and 2 sometimes misbehave and show negative attitudes
- Pupils develop their personal qualities well as they move through the school, based on good provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- Good monitoring and promotion of attendance is helping to reduce the number of absences

**Commentary**

7. Standards are similar to those described in the previous inspection report. Pupils say they enjoy school and their parents agree. The pupils show a keen response to the wide range of extra-curricular events provided. The pupils in Year 6 say they will be sad to leave the school as they like their teachers. Teachers and teaching assistants ensure that the pupils with special educational needs, and those learning English as an additional language, feel fully included and valued.
8. In Years 3 to 6 pupils concentrate well and show good levels of interest in their work. Teachers use this motivation well in most lessons and it has a positive impact on pupils' achievement. For example, in a Years 5 and 6 design and technology lesson the teacher's encouragement of the pupils to review and improve their designs helped them work enthusiastically and productively to make various musical instruments from a range of materials. In some lessons in Years 1 and 2, pupils do not demonstrate the same positive response to learning. This occurs because teaching does not always generate sufficient challenge or interest, so that with some pupils lacking motivation and enthusiasm, standards of behaviour suffer. This was seen in a mathematics lesson where pupils said the tasks were "easy". In such lessons, the pupils do not maintain concentration, are slow to respond to questions and are at times badly behaved.
9. Behaviour is good around the school, at playtimes and in most lessons. It was particularly good during wet playtime with pupils busily engaged in a wide range of games and activities. Whilst the majority of the children in the Foundation Stage achieve the expected goals in their personal, social and emotional development, a small minority at times show unsatisfactory development of self-control and acceptance of established class routines.
10. Pupils and parents say there is no serious bullying, racist or sexist behaviour and potential incidents are dealt with quickly and effectively. This is confirmed by the lack of pupil exclusions over the last two years. Pupils understand the school rules and know what to do and who to speak to if minor squabbles or accidents happen. Pupils are generally polite and well mannered. Relationships throughout the school are good. Lunchtime is a particularly friendly part of the school day, with pupils from all year groups mixing and socialising well.
11. The school builds well on pupils' attitudes through the good provision made for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils develop good levels of confidence and self-esteem as they move through the school. They conscientiously undertake a range of responsibilities, such as being house captains or members of the school council. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 run lunchtime library sessions for younger pupils. Pupils' interest and success in areas such as music, poetry and art are encouraged and celebrated well. For instance, pupils participate in the local folk music festival. Good work, such as that on Aboriginal art and an anthology of reflective poems from Year 5 and 6 pupils is displayed prominently around the school. Displays also reflect the strong Catholic ethos that permeates the work of the school. The Prayer Garden provides a focal point for peaceful reflection. Pupils are developing their awareness of what it means to be a good citizen through, for example, the provision of the school council, raising monies for a wide range of charities and being involved in local cultural events. Their awareness of those worse off or different from themselves is promoted well. The school has established a very strong link with a school in Sierra Leone that helps pupils appreciate different cultures. The successful valuing of the cultural heritage of both pupils and members of staff helps them appreciate the richness and diversity of cultures present in this country.

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

Authorised absence	
School data	8.4
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.0
National data	0.5

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

12. Attendance levels in the current year are average, with a significant improvement of over three percent in the overall level having occurred this year. This is because of the success of the school's strategies to promote, record and monitor attendance. The prompt and persistent follow up of unexplained absences is very effective. Punctuality is satisfactory, with most pupils attending on time; only a small number are persistently late.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided is satisfactory.

### Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. There are good aspects of teaching and learning which are becoming consistent throughout the school. Assessment procedures and the tracking of pupils' progress have recently become much more thorough, so that they provide teachers with a clear picture of each pupil's progress, especially in English and mathematics. In the Foundation Stage assessment procedures are good.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good questioning skills stimulate the pupils' thinking and ensure that all are involved in the learning
- The teaching of science is not sufficiently well planned
- The teaching of pupils with special educational needs does not take adequate account of their individual targets
- The good relationships between teachers and pupils, combined with effective behaviour management in Years 3 to 6, contribute positively to the pupils' learning
- In the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2, the behaviour management of a minority of pupils is unsatisfactory

### Commentary

#### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 22 lessons*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
	1	7	12	2		

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

13. The quality of teaching is not as good as it was at the previous inspection, when there was no unsatisfactory teaching and a higher proportion of good and very good teaching. Since then, the school has been through a difficult period, which has included the appointment of a new headteacher and several staffing changes. The new headteacher has a good awareness of strengths and weaknesses in teaching. In the last few months since his release from a heavy teaching commitment, he has devoted considerable time to improving teaching. This has had a significant impact in Years 3 to 6, where teaching is now good overall. In Years 1 and 2, the quality of teaching and learning varies from very good to unsatisfactory and is satisfactory overall. The headteacher is already taking steps to improve teaching in this area. In the Foundation Stage, the teaching is satisfactory overall with some significant strengths, especially in teaching communication, language and literacy and mathematical development.
14. The teachers use good questioning techniques, ensuring that all the pupils are purposefully involved in their learning. Discussion with pupils during lessons successfully helps the pupils to evaluate their own work and to seek improvement. A good example of this was seen during a lesson in Years 5 and 6, in which the teacher's questioning of the pupils'

opinions about the poems they were studying encouraged them to reflect on their work and explore the text in greater depth.

15. The teaching of science is not planned sufficiently well to meet the individual needs of pupils and this slows their learning. In Years 1 to 6, pupils are given too few opportunities to carry out practical investigative work. Discussion with pupils indicates that there are gaps in their knowledge and understanding. This is because the teaching of some aspects of science is not thorough enough. Opportunities are also missed to extend the pupils' knowledge, understanding and use of scientific vocabulary.
16. There has been a recent emphasis on planning work to meet the specific needs of different pupils. Though not yet fully embedded across all subjects, this process is beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' learning, especially in English and mathematics. Satisfactory planning to meet the needs of higher attaining pupils was observed in several lessons. Good examples were seen in a mathematics lesson in Years 5 and 6, where the higher attaining pupils were challenged well to find different ways to display data. In addition, the teaching of pupils who are learning English as an additional language was consistently good and they were included very successfully. A significant feature was the valuing of their home languages. The teaching assistants make a positive contribution to the pupils' learning, often providing good support to the pupils with special educational needs. In some lessons, work is carefully planned to build on what these pupils already know. However, in general, there is too little use of the targets for improvement identified on their individual plans. The wording of the targets is not simple enough to be meaningful to the pupils, so that they can be appropriately involved in their learning.
17. The teachers often introduce learning in exciting ways that help the pupils to recall what they have already learnt, and to stimulate their interest in new learning. In a lesson in Years 3 and 4, the teacher led a lively discussion about the advertisements which the pupils had seen during a weekend. This aroused their interest and encouraged them to think about the language of persuasion.
18. The good relationship between teachers and pupils and effective behaviour management in Years 3 to 6 contribute positively to the pupils' learning. Behaviour management has been a recent and successful focus for development. In the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2, most of the pupils show positive attitudes to learning and behave well. However, the behaviour of a significant minority of pupils is not managed well and at times their behaviour and their attitudes to learning are unsatisfactory. Sometimes, for the Year 2 pupils in particular, this is linked to a lack of challenge in the learning. In a very good lesson in English, where the teacher made known his high expectations of behaviour and provided tasks which were both interesting and challenging, the pupils in Years 1 and 2 behaved very well, remained focused on their work and were very productive.

## **The curriculum**

Overall, the school offers a satisfactory curriculum with good opportunities for enrichment. Taken together, the school's accommodation and resources are adequate.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The balance of the different aspects of the science curriculum is unsatisfactory

- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is inconsistent
- A good variety of extra-curricular clubs and activities enhances the children's learning

### **Commentary**

19. The Foundation Stage curriculum covers all the necessary areas of learning and in Years 1 to 6 the national strategies are given appropriate weighting to support the development of the children's literacy and numeracy skills.
20. Taken overall, curriculum breadth has improved since the last inspection. There is now fuller provision for ICT, and evidence drawn from the displays of work around the school suggests that some aspects of art and design are being taught imaginatively. However, the science curriculum lacks balance, especially in Years 1 and 2. The pupils receive a good grounding in natural science and life processes, but the coverage of physical processes and materials lacks adequate depth. There is insufficient investigative science in Years 1 to 6.
21. The school has a strongly Christian and caring ethos and provides good pastoral care for all pupils regardless of background and ability. However, the current approaches to setting targets for pupils with special educational needs lack rigour. The individual education plans are too vague and do not provide teachers with enough information to plan work and activities that are appropriately matched to individual needs, and which will help accelerate the progress of these children.
22. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular clubs and activities. These include an interesting mixture of sporting and cultural activities, ranging from football and athletics to chess and poetry. An increasing number of pupils benefit from the provision of instrumental tuition. One project is successfully promoting singing and music making amongst boys in Years 5 and 6, helping to challenge stereotypical views about boys and music. Effective use is made of well-planned visits to local places of educational interest, such as the parish church, the nearby castle and museums.

### **Care, guidance and support**

The school takes good steps to ensure pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. Satisfactory support, advice and guidance are provided to each pupil. The school involves pupils adequately in its work and development.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Procedures for ensuring child protection and the pupils' health and safety are good
- There is a strong, caring ethos
- Good progress has been made recently in giving pupils a voice
- Pupils' personal development is not formally monitored

### **Commentary**

23. No comments were made on this aspect in the previous inspection. Close attention to health and safety, child protection and fire procedures ensures that pupils work in a safe and healthy environment. Parents and pupils agree that the school takes good steps to provide a safe and caring environment, in which the pupils are happy. The school is clean, tidy and secure. The recent introduction of shutters has helped to reduce vandalism and made the school more attractive to prospective parents and pupils. Good care is taken to ensure that a responsible adult collects the youngest pupils.

24. The strong, caring ethos ensures that every pupil feels valued and cared for. Examples of the way in which pupils' needs are catered for are the facility to purchase toast at breaktime and the very good provision of a range of freshly cooked food at lunchtime. This evidence of caring has a positive impact on pupils' attitudes to learning and their personal development. Members of staff listen to and value the opinions of pupils, and the pupils themselves appreciate that this is the case. The recently formed school council is beginning to provide a good forum in which pupils can raise issues, concerns and ideas. Pupils feel that they are well involved and consulted and are, for instance, proud that their idea of having bins in the playground has already been adopted.
25. Educational support and guidance are satisfactory, including the induction arrangements for children as they join the reception class. Pupils are given suitable support and are express confidence about their move to secondary education. The advice and guidance they are given is based on sound assessment information. The older pupils are developing their self-knowledge through their self-evaluation of their own learning. Personal development is supported adequately, as most members of staff know the pupils well, but there are no formal systems to record personal development and provide records for the benefit of temporary members of staff.

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

The school has satisfactory links with parents and other schools, and good links with the community.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents' confidence in the school is returning
- Parents receive regular and informative newsletters
- Information to parents in written reports about their children's progress is unsatisfactory

### **Commentary**

26. No comments were made on this aspect in the previous inspection. Parents, both in their response to the pre-inspection survey and at the parents' meeting, expressed mainly positive views about the school. The school, with a strong lead from the headteacher, has worked hard to regain the confidence of parents. Members of staff are accessible at the start and end of the school day and problems and concerns are dealt with quickly and effectively. Helpful information for parents is displayed prominently. A small band of loyal parents give regular help, and this is greatly valued by the school. The school is building up parental support through an increasingly active parents' and teachers' association. Parents have been involved, for example, in developing the Prayer Garden.
27. The provision of a community education programme is helping parents to support their children's learning in literacy and numeracy. Parents are encouraged to attend weekly achievement assemblies. The parents of pupils with special educational needs are appropriately involved in the review of their child's progress twice a year. The introduction of weekly newsletters provides parents with good information about the life of the school and pupils' general activities, and frequent reminders about the need for good attendance. However, these letters currently contain too little information on the curriculum.



28. The annual written reports to parents about their children's progress meet legal requirements, but they do not provide parents with sufficient information about their children's progress and the standards they have achieved, nor do they indicate specific areas for development and how parents may help. There is some inconsistency in the content of the reports between classes. The school has good plans to improve the quality and consistency of reports for the current academic year. The parent/teacher consultation sessions are much appreciated by parents.
29. Pupils are involved in a wide range of local and church events and the school uses the local area well to support learning. Community support has a positive impact on pupils' achievement, especially in relation to their personal development and involvement in creative activities, such as music and art. The partnership with the local group of schools provides good opportunities for competitive sport and ensures that pupils are adequately prepared for their move to secondary school. Local business links provide good experiences for pupils in, for example, developing skills in information and communication technology and in reading. The school also involves the local community by providing facilities for a private nursery and for events such as a model railway exhibition.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Overall, the leadership, management and governance of the school are satisfactory. The headteacher's leadership is good, as is the governance of the school. The leadership of the subject coordinators is satisfactory overall, but needs further development. The management of the school is satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher has a good understanding of what the school needs to do to improve
- There is commendable determination among all of the staff to bring about school improvement
- There has been considerable improvement in the management of provision for pupils with special educational needs, but elements remain unsatisfactory
- Governors support the school well and have good knowledge of its strengths and weaknesses
- The roles of the coordinators are developing satisfactorily, but the coordinators need to increase their influence further

### **Commentary**

30. The school has been through a difficult period and issues of staffing are still being resolved. However, the headteacher has a strong sense of purpose and high aspirations in leading the school forward. His precise analysis of the school's strengths and weaknesses, detailed planning and close monitoring and evaluation of progress with school initiatives, are beginning to improve achievement. Much support has been provided from external sources to help improve the quality of education and to raise standards. The information gained from frequent analysis of each pupil's progress is beginning to be used effectively to influence the teachers' planning. Greater attention is paid to meeting the needs of pupils with special educational needs and those who are higher attainers and this is becoming more consistent practice. There is a shared commitment to improve the inclusion for all pupils and this is particularly evident in relation to pupils who are learning English as an additional language.

31. There is a commendable conviction among all teaching and non-teaching staff that they can and will improve the quality of education that the school provides, thus raising standards and achievement as a consequence. To this end, the teachers are working hard to implement the agreed changes to their teaching. Through performance management, staff development is linked closely to the school's priorities for improvement. The teachers and teaching assistants provide a good model of teamwork. The school has a very good administrator who, together with the caretaking and lunchtime staff, contributes to the smooth running of the day-to-day life of the school.
32. The coordinator for special educational needs is relatively new to the role and has acted swiftly to set up individual education plans for each pupil with needs and to ensure that reviews of progress take place. He has supported the teacher in Years 1 and 2 in writing the plans for the pupils in that class. However, throughout the school, not enough is yet done to improve the process of target setting and the monitoring of pupils' progress towards the targets.
33. The governance of the school is good and statutory requirements are met. The governors are very keen to support the school in bringing about improvement and give willingly of their time to school matters. Several governors regularly help in school. Governors gain further knowledge of the school through visits to classes and by talking with the teachers. The flow of information between the governors and the headteacher is free, open and honest. The governors are kept well informed about the school's priorities through information supplied by the headteacher. Meetings of both the governing body and its committees are run effectively, and minutes indicate the broad extent to which governors are aware of, and are involved in, current priorities for the school.
34. The headteacher's role as coordinator for mathematics, and the improvements in standards which he has initiated, provides a good example of best practice. The monitoring roles of the coordinators are being developed satisfactorily. For example, the coordinator for English has analysed pupils' work from across the school and has observed teaching in other classes. However, the school is aware that it needs to develop further the coordinators' understanding of, and influence over, teaching and learning in their subjects.
35. The management of the budget is satisfactory. The school is currently redressing a deficit budget, brought about largely by a very significant fall in numbers a few years ago. Pupil numbers are now rising and there is a realistic plan to eliminate the deficit by April 2007. All spending is closely linked to key priorities for the school and thorough consideration is given before decisions are taken. Governors work closely with the headteacher in managing the budget and in ensuring that the principles of best value are applied to spending decisions. The administrative arrangements for the day-to-day control of finances are both efficient and effective.

## Financial information

### *Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004*

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	258246	Balance from previous year	-12781

Total expenditure	267898
Expenditure per pupil	3267

Balance carried forward to the next	-22433
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## **PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS**

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

36. Children are admitted to the reception class in the September after their fourth birthday with skills that are usually below those expected of four-year-olds. They are taught by two part-time teachers, supported by a teaching assistant. Overall, their achievement is satisfactory and, by the end of the reception year, approximately half achieve the expected goals in most of the areas of learning. In communication, language and literacy, less than half achieve the goals, especially in the reading and writing aspects of this area of learning. This is similar to the findings at the previous inspection. The leadership of the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. The staff work together effectively and the positive relationships between the adults sets a good example to the children.

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

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

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

- The staff make good use of opportunities to promote moral development
- A small minority of children do not consistently conform to the routines of the class

#### **Commentary**

37. Overall, the children's achievement and the teaching and learning are satisfactory. In several aspects of this area of learning, they are good. The development of personal, social and emotional skills is given suitably high priority. This is particularly important as many of the children have poor skills when they are first admitted. The daily routines, such as hanging their coats on a peg and getting out and tidying away equipment, successfully encourage independence, with the staff intervening as necessary to help the children learn. Most of the children engage purposefully in their play because the activities provided stimulate their interest and the staff keep a watchful eye on what is happening, intervening to stimulate and challenge when necessary. The majority of the children have learned to play cooperatively, taking turns and sharing as they mould with dough or use construction equipment together. Strategies to encourage good behaviour are largely successful, but a minority of children display unacceptable behaviour, failing to conform to the class routines or to exercise an acceptable level of self-discipline. Dealing with these children takes up the teacher's time and sometimes slows the learning of others. The teachers are successful in encouraging the children to consider their own feelings and those of others. When a piece of railway track was broken, the teacher encouraged the children to think about how it feels to have something of yours broken, and to consider the need to tell the truth and own up. Similarly, the children are encouraged to consider others during times of prayer and reflection.

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

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

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children are successfully encouraged to speak, listen and read
- Copy-writing, which limits the children's progress in learning to write independently, is overused

## Commentary

38. The teaching and learning are satisfactory, and have several strong features. The children's achievement is satisfactory in reading and writing skills, and good in speaking and listening. Their low starting points mean that less than half of them achieve the expected goals by the end of the year, especially in the reading and writing aspects. The teachers provide many opportunities for the children to develop their skills. The use of a bag containing toys at the start of a lesson stimulated the children's interest and encouraged them to look, listen and speak. The teacher's skilful targeting of questions made sure that all the children were involved. She was particularly careful to include a child who was learning to speak English by asking him questions that were within his vocabulary range. The children listen intently to stories which are told well by the staff. This helps them to develop their listening skills and to foster a love of books. The children recognise a few words and are beginning to be able to tell a story from looking at the pictures. The higher attainers are beginning to read independently. The staff engage the children in conversation frequently and are mindful to encourage each child to contribute. Occasionally, opportunities are missed to extend the children's vocabulary or to ask questions that require a more complete answer than a single word or phrase. The teaching of letter sounds is good and is made fun for the children by the use of accompanying actions. Letter formation is taught frequently and successfully. Writing materials are constantly available for the children to use; notepads in the role-play areas encourage the children to write shopping lists or to take orders in the café. However, there are missed opportunities for children to use the good knowledge and understanding they have of letters and letter sounds in writing independently. Few confidently 'have a go' at developing independent writing skills, trying to spell words for themselves.

## MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children's interest is aroused by the good pace at the start of lessons
- Mathematical vocabulary is taught effectively

## Commentary

39. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and has some significant strengths, such as the pace of learning at the start of lessons. The range of approaches to teaching stimulates the children's interest. However, teaching and learning are sometimes interrupted by the inattention and inappropriate behaviour of a small minority of children. From their below average start, the children achieve well over the year and approximately half reach the expected goals. The children achieve well in acquiring basic numeracy skills because the teacher uses their natural enthusiasm for counting and using numbers.

Singing and reciting number rhymes, accompanied by actions, helps to reinforce counting forwards and backwards. The children join in enthusiastically with counting aloud in 2s, 5s and 10s. With the teacher's help, the more able children identify number patterns up to a hundred. An emphasis on the correct use of mathematical language enables children to acquire new words to use in number activities and helps to ensure that they make good progress in gaining mathematical understanding. The children are encouraged to understand and use words such as *odd*, *even* and *pairs*. They recognise some two and three-dimensional shapes and the majority are familiar with the terms *2D* and *3D*.

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

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

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Imaginative use of resources captures the children's interest
- More teacher intervention in role-play would enhance the children's independent play

## Commentary

40. Overall, teaching, learning and achievement are satisfactory. There are some important strengths in the teaching. By the end of the reception year, about half of the children achieve the expected goals. The children are helped to gain an understanding of the rest of the world through a range of interesting activities, such as tasting food from other countries during a picnic outdoors, identifying the countries concerned on a world map, and counting in the home languages of some of the children in the class. The teacher effectively used a story about two children visiting the seaside to stimulate the children's imaginations. After reading the story very expressively, the teacher prompted their thinking by asking questions such as; "What else might they put in their suitcase?". The use of appropriate accompanying music, combined with good questioning, encouraged the children to imagine themselves at the seaside and to express their ideas. At times, in the role-play areas, the children do not play sensibly, but when the staff intervene and model the role-play activities for them, it helps the children to develop their imagination as well as their speaking and listening skills. For example, when the teacher asked for the menu in the 'café', ordered food and then wrote a cheque to pay the bill, the children could see how a customer might speak and behave. This resulted in more meaningful, independent play by the children. The children have access to a computer, and a suitable range of programs is available; the children generally develop good mouse control skills.

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children have many opportunities to develop skills of physical manipulation
- A secure area for learning outdoors is not yet established

## Commentary

41. The children's achievement and the teaching and learning are satisfactory. By the end of the reception year, approximately half of the children achieve the expected goals. In rolling dough, and in using cutters and scissors, the children practise making precise movements with their fingers and develop better control. They hold pencils correctly as they practise writing and colouring skills. Children who were painting sunny or stormy pictures knew how to remove excess paint from their brushes on the side of the pot. The staff encourage the children to take off and put on their shoes and socks when changing for outdoor exercise, helping and supporting them as necessary. Regular play with construction kits, such as a model railway, helps the children to practise and improve these skills. The children were given suitable opportunities to move around the hall in a variety of ways and showed satisfactory awareness of each other and of the space around them. They were able to run, hop, skip and walk backwards. The use of a game in which the last person to stop in response to a signal had to sit and watch, helped the children to practise their physical control and to learn to follow rules. However, the silly behaviour of a few children

detracted from the fun of the game. There is currently no secure designated outdoor area for the reception children. A door giving access to the outside has recently been installed and there are suitable plans to develop a secure outdoor area to benefit the pupils' learning.



## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in creative development is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The children sing simple songs from memory, joining in with actions
- They experiment with percussion instruments to accompany their singing

### **Commentary**

42. The achievement, teaching and learning are satisfactory. By the end of the reception year, almost half the children achieve the expected goals. The children sing enthusiastically and enjoy joining in with actions. They have learned a small repertoire of songs for which they have memorised the words. The children are learning the correct way to play percussion instruments such as shakers and tambors. The teacher revised with the children both the names of the instruments and how to play them properly. This resulted in a better performance by the children as they made music to represent both calm and stormy weather. When children were attempting to paint pictures to represent these types of weather, the teacher intervened both to remind them how to mix colours and to stimulate their thinking about the sorts of colours they might associate with these two types of weather. Children building a railway were able to say that the train would go under the bridge, but needed more adult help to develop an imaginative story about what was happening in their play.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are rising and achievement is improving as a consequence of the effectiveness of the school's new strategies
- The teaching of pupils with special educational needs does not focus closely enough on their individual education plans
- The teachers make learning interesting for the pupils and this motivates them to succeed
- The pupils are involved successfully in evaluating their learning

### **Commentary**

43. The school's initiatives to improve the teaching of reading and writing are having a positive effect on standards and achievement. The teaching is satisfactory overall and has some significant strengths, particularly in the motivation provided by the teachers and the relationships between them and the pupils. Achievement in Years 2 and 6 is satisfactory overall. Standards in the current Year 2 are below average and in Year 6 they are well below average. However, this is as a result of the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in each of these year groups. A more accurate measure of the school's success is evident in the work of the other year groups, where standards in

speaking, listening, reading and writing are much closer to average, and achievement is often good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.

44. A daily session dedicated to developing reading is successful in teaching and reinforcing reading skills. Good progress can now be seen in the accuracy, fluency, expression and understanding which pupils develop as they move through the school. Most pupils display positive attitudes to reading and these are being fostered in the pupils by the enthusiasm for reading conveyed by the teachers.
45. Writing has been identified as a weakness, and various new strategies are therefore being introduced, to such good effect that standards and achievement are now rising. The pupils' books show a wide range of writing for different purposes, such as description, debate and poetry. Lesson planning takes a greater account of the learning needs of different pupils, including those who are learning English as an additional language. Planning by the headteacher for a range of needs was very successful in a lesson in Years 1 and 2, where three different writing tasks provided suitable challenge to build on what the pupils had already learned. It resulted in pupils of all abilities, including the higher attaining pupils and those with special educational needs, working purposefully. However, this detail in planning is not uniform across all lessons, and whilst it is often satisfactory, sometimes there is insufficient challenge for the higher attaining pupils. A focus on handwriting and presentation is also proving successful, and work in pupils' books shows significant improvement over recent months. Writing is given much greater prominence in displays around the school. Some writing is word-processed, but the use of ICT is not as widespread as it should be.
46. The pupils with special educational needs are often supported well by the teaching assistants and teachers and this enables them to make satisfactory progress during lessons. However, rarely are the targets on their individual education plans included in the teachers' planning. This slows their progress towards meeting the specific learning needs identified for each of them.
47. The teachers regularly make lessons interesting for the pupils and this motivates them to learn. In Years 5 and 6, the teacher has fostered in the pupils a keen interest in poetry and they work diligently to understand and enjoy what they are reading. This is accomplished by the teacher's expressive reading and skilful questioning, which enables the pupils both to enjoy the rhythm and rhyme and to explore the meaning within poems. Good opportunities are created to develop the skills of speaking and listening as pupils express their views about the feelings and emotions of the poets.
48. Targets for improvement are identified for each pupil and these are displayed in the front of their English books. As a consequence, the pupils have a good understanding of what they are trying to achieve and of how well they are doing. At the beginning of lessons, teachers share with pupils what they are going to learn and this helps to involve the pupils in their learning. Discussion during lessons also helps pupils to evaluate how well they have done. In a lesson in Years 3 and 4, when pupils were using persuasive language to write advertising slogans, the teacher skilfully helped them to understand the possible impact of their slogans and steered them to revise their wording as necessary. At the end of a lesson in Years 5 and 6, the teacher asked the pupils to say what they had learned. This both helped the pupils to evaluate their learning, and provided the teacher with an opportunity to assess their progress.

49. The coordinator's role has developed considerably since the previous inspection and is satisfactory overall. She has observed some teaching in other classes, and been involved in evaluating pupils' work and analysing assessment data. She has satisfactory knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject. However, she does not yet have sufficient knowledge of, and influence over, teaching and learning throughout the school.

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

49. There are satisfactory examples of literacy being used well in other subjects, such as in historical accounts and geographical descriptions. In most lessons, question and answer sessions are used well to develop pupils' oral and written responses. However, there is no guidance to help teachers plan these opportunities systematically across a range of subjects.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers use a good range and variety of questions
- Pupils behave well in lessons and have positive attitudes to learning, particularly in the older classes
- The subject co-ordinator provides good leadership
- Work is not matched consistently well to meet the needs of higher attaining pupils and those with special educational needs
- There is some unsatisfactory teaching

### **Commentary**

50. In Years 2 and 6, achievement is satisfactory and standards are below average. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection. In Year 6, there is a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs who are working at a level well below the national average. However, standards are rising and pupils make satisfactory progress over the year. For example, pupils confidently use a variety of written methods to solve number problems and use a range of different and appropriate units for measuring. Pupils respond well to the teachers' high expectations about the presentation of their work.

51. Teaching is satisfactory overall, with some good aspects. Some lessons start at a brisk pace and pupils respond well. For example, in a lesson in Years 3 and 4, the pupils used whiteboards to respond to a range of questions about time, which the teacher asked at a quick pace, stimulating and engaging the pupils. In most lessons, teachers appropriately ensure that their questions encourage pupils to think clearly and deeply. Teachers pitch their questions at different levels, so that all pupils can join in the responses. Older pupils feel they receive considerable support from their teacher, who makes lessons interesting and fun. Work is regularly assessed and all pupils have numeracy targets in their books, which are regularly reviewed.

52. Pupils generally behave well and listen attentively. This is particularly noticeable in Years 5 and 6, where pupils have positive attitudes to learning, and work with quiet concentration.
53. The subject co-ordinator has a good, clear understanding of standards across the school. He is fully aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject, particularly the gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding from previous years, which have affected the attainment of the older pupils. He ensures that teachers attend relevant training, and supports them in their planning, which he monitors regularly.
54. Although, in some lessons, higher attaining pupils are suitably challenged, this is not consistent across the school, particularly in the main activity during numeracy lessons. Many of these pupils could achieve more if the work contained better opportunities for them to extend their skills. The work set for pupils with special educational needs is not sufficiently matched to their individual needs. Often, they are given tasks which do not develop their understanding. Teachers ensure that pupils who are learning English as an additional language fully understand and are involved. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, pupils are not given clear explanations of what is expected. The work is not matched to pupils' needs, and so is too hard for some and too easy for others. This, in turn, can lead to inappropriate behaviour and very little learning taking place.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

55. The teachers make satisfactory use of opportunities to develop mathematical skills in other subjects. There was some evidence of mathematics being used in science, for example in work on graphs and tables. However, there is no written guidance to ensure that opportunities are not missed.

### **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **unsatisfactory**.

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

- The behaviour and attitudes of pupils in the older classes are good.
- Some areas of the curriculum are not taught in sufficient depth, especially in Years 1 and 2
- There is insufficient practical investigation work, and a lack of planning to meet the needs of different individuals and groups
- There is some unsatisfactory teaching
- Leadership of the subject is unsatisfactory

#### **Commentary**

56. Standards in Years 2 and 6 are below average and pupils do not achieve as well as they could. There has been no improvement since the last inspection. There are many gaps in pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding. By the end of Year 6, they do not fully understand how to devise a fair test and their scientific vocabulary is limited. Pupils in Year 6 are aware of their lack of knowledge, but they feel they have learnt a lot during the

last year. In Year 2, pupils understand the characteristics of living things, but their knowledge of materials and physical processes is very limited. Pupils in the older classes demonstrate good attitudes to learning. They behave well in lessons, sustain concentration and respond well to the teachers' questions.

57. There is a general lack of opportunity for pupils to undertake practical investigations. In the Years 5 and 6 class, there has been a greater emphasis on providing such opportunities and pupils value these experiences, saying they learn more from practical activities. Developing this across the school would help to improve pupils' scientific skills. At the moment, there is a heavy reliance on published worksheets and not enough opportunity for pupils to undertake independent work.
58. Some areas of the science curriculum are not taught to sufficient depth in Years 1 and 2. There is evidence of work about life processes and living things in pupils' books, but little evidence of work on materials and physical processes. A lesson about batteries was observed during the inspection and there was a display showing electrical appliances but little other evidence was available. Pupils could talk about their work on plants and animals, but had too little knowledge of other areas of science.
59. The coordinator's monitoring of the subject and influence over teaching and learning is unsatisfactory. She does not have a clear understanding of standards across the school. She has identified a need for more practical investigations, but her knowledge of strengths and weaknesses in the subject is inadequate. The current system of assessment lacks sufficient detail and is being changed, following a review by the headteacher.
60. The quality of teaching has improved in Years 3 to 6 and is satisfactory. In Years 1 and 2, it is unsatisfactory. Where teaching was unsatisfactory, there was not enough equipment for pupils to use. The turn-taking which resulted slowed the pace of learning and caused some disruption. All pupils were then given the same worksheet to complete, which included the colouring in of the diagrams on the sheet. This activity did not promote scientific learning and was not matched to individual needs. Consequently, some pupils behaved inappropriately. Across the school, work in the subject is generally not planned to meet the needs of individual pupils. Higher attaining pupils, those with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language are often given the same task, which fails to provide appropriate challenge. As a result, pupils' understanding, knowledge and skills do not improve as quickly as they should.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- By Year 6 the pupils are enthusiastic and responsible users of the school's computers
- Insufficient use is made of the computer suite

### **Commentary**

61. Although it was possible to observe very little direct teaching of ICT, the analysis of the displays of work, conversations with the pupils and informal observations of them using the school's computers confirm that in Years 2 and 6 standards are broadly in line with the

expected levels. Overall achievement is satisfactory. The pupils achieve best in Years 3 to 6 because the teaching systematically helps them to acquire the necessary skills, knowledge and understanding across each strand of the curriculum. For instance, there are good examples of the pupils using programs such as *Excel* to devise simple spreadsheets, *PowerPoint* to present and share information and *Word* to compose poetry. In the next few weeks, a well considered visit to a technology centre will add further depth to their understanding of how to use ICT to control devices or detect physical changes. The curriculum coverage in Years 1 and 2 is more sporadic, but conversations with some of the pupils suggests that they have a secure knowledge of a small range of appropriate programs such as *Splash* and *Textease*, and reasonable appreciation of the potential uses of new technologies.

62. The creation of a small suite of computers has clearly improved provision for the teaching of this subject. However, it is apparent from both scrutiny of current timetable arrangements and direct observation of activity in the suite, that the suite lies idle for long periods each day. This is a waste of a valuable resource. The location of the suite, close to the classes containing Years 3 to 6, means that it is these pupils who have the easiest access, and consequently, Year 5 and 6 pupils are allowed to use the computers on days when the weather is inclement at break times. On one such occasion, the pupils were observed working with great maturity for an extended period. Boys and girls work together co-operatively and are fully aware of the rules regarding the use of the suite. They can also clearly explain which types of game or research interests them. It is ironic that with such well-motivated pupils the inspectors were unable to observe any independent work in the suite during lessons.

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

63. Although the provision for the teaching of ICT has improved, the teachers are not yet making the most of the power of ICT to support learning across the entire curriculum. For instance, although some imaginative use is made of computer programs to develop work in art and design, there is currently very limited evidence of the pupils regularly using ICT to support research in history and geography, or to sift and analyse data in science lessons, or compose their own text directly on screen. The school is continuing to expand its use of ICT across a range of subjects.

## **HUMANITIES**

Work in history and geography was sampled.

64. In **geography**, one lesson was observed in Years 1 and 2. There was insufficient evidence to make judgements about standards and achievement. Discussion with pupils in Years 5 and 6 indicated sound knowledge of environmental issues connected with tree preservation and forests. The pupils talked informatively about physical environments, and their books showed some good work on mountains, with particular reference to altitude, climate and human activity. Their knowledge of maps, plans and scale was less secure. In the observed lesson, the children were comparing the contrasting localities of Warwick and the seaside. The teacher's questioning prompted the pupils successfully to identify

some key differences, making reference to manmade and natural features. The learning became much livelier when the teacher used photographs to stimulate the pupils' interest.

65. In **history**, no teaching was observed and there was insufficient evidence to make judgements about standards and achievement. Discussion with pupils in Year 6 indicates that the curriculum for Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory. Their recent work on the Romans has provided them with a satisfactory knowledge of Roman society and of some significant events. Research on the Internet and in books has provided information for use in *PowerPoint* presentations by the pupils. A current study of local history has been enriched by visits to the site of an old monastery and to the Records Office. Pupils recall little about the use of historical artefacts in their studies. Pupils in Year 2 were able to describe a few facts about the Fire of London and to talk about old and new toys and games. Work in their books indicates a lack of breadth to their learning experiences, especially for the higher attaining pupils.

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

66. One lesson was observed in art and design, and one in design and technology. Samples of the pupils' work were examined in these subjects and discussed with them. It was not possible to observe the teaching of physical education and music, or to gather sufficient evidence to make judgements about standards or the pupils' achievements.
67. In Year 6, the pupils are achieving sound standards in **art and design**. Classrooms, corridors and shared areas are enlivened by attractive displays of the children's work. For instance, bold paintings in the style of Aboriginal art adorn the walls outside the Years 3 and 4 class and the entrance hall contains a lively variety of presentations of a chair, including, in one or two cases, an ingenious mix of media. The Years 3 and 4 lesson was well taught and benefited from the presence of an art specialist employed by the school, who is helping to raise the profile of the subject and to extend the work of the higher attaining pupils. A good variety of stimuli were provided to help the children decide the shapes and images they would use in designing their board games and maps. The quality of discussion between adults and children was good in that it helped the pupils evaluate what they were doing in order to improve their work. There was also a continuous focus upon ensuring that the pupils used the correct techniques to achieve their desired effect. Examination of the pupils' sketchbooks reveals that they are in regular and effective use. In discussion, the Years 5 and 6 pupils spoke enthusiastically about previous visits to the local park, where they made sketches of trees and leaves that formed the basis for their work back in school. Year 6 pupils develop a satisfactory knowledge of artists and speak intelligently about painters such as Lowry, van Gogh and Picasso. One girl expressed a liking for Monet, saying; "He's the one who paints those hazy pictures of trees and ponds".
68. Throughout the school there is increasing evidence of the school's computers being used effectively to enable the children to design and draw on screen. In Years 1 and 2, the children have successfully created a series of pictures based upon a view from a window of a spacecraft, using the program *Splosh*. Years 3 and 4 extended their use of the program by exporting their designs into *Textease* to create tiles that could be arranged and rotated to produce attractive patterns. However, whilst the pupils recall occasional use of clay and plasticene, the current range of artistic activity is mostly confined to two-dimensional work.

69. The Year 5 and 6 **design and technology** lesson was well taught. The children were enthused by the idea of creating their own instruments, and several brought in additional resources from home as part of their homework. Each pupil had drawn careful, annotated plans, and a good start has been made to the construction of the instruments using a variety of appropriate cutting and fixing techniques. The teacher was confident and knowledgeable. Her strong rapport with the class meant that the children behaved sensibly and maturely throughout, so that no time was lost and she could provide challenge for the higher attainers as well as good support for the many pupils with special educational needs. Subsequent conversations with the pupils revealed extremely positive attitudes to the subject, and they recalled at length their enjoyment of sampling and evaluating bread, designing and making sandwiches and the challenge of constructing packaging for the sandwich and a drink.

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

### **Personal, social and health education**

This area of the curriculum was sampled.

70. An effective policy guides teachers. There is strong emphasis on discussion, with particular focus on concern for each other, help for the less fortunate and development of the spiritual self. The beneficial outcomes can be seen in the pupils' largely positive attitudes, good behaviour and personal development. Pupils are provided with sex and relationships education and are made aware of the dangers of drug and alcohol abuse, with appropriate reference to the strong Catholic ethos in the school. The newly formed school council enables the pupils to participate in decision-making. The opportunity which this provides to influence what happens in their school is greatly valued by them. This participation also contributes to their understanding of citizenship. In discussion, the pupils say that they are listened to and feel valued by the staff.



## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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