

INSPECTION REPORT

ST ANNE'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Ormskirk

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119682

Headteacher: Miss P Wilson

Lead inspector: Mrs C E Waine

Dates of inspection: 16th – 19th May 2005

Inspection number: 267437

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary
School category: Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils: 4 – 11 years
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 489

School address: Aughton Street
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Ormskirk
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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of Mr A Holland
governors:

Date of previous April 1999
inspection:

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St Anne's Catholic Primary School is much bigger than most other primary schools with 489 boys and girls aged four to 11 years, and 47 children attending the grant funded nursery on a part-time basis. The nursery had a separate inspection in November 2004. The socio-economic circumstances of the school are better than those of most schools and a lower proportion of pupils are in receipt of free school meals than is usual. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is below average overall but a higher proportion has a statement of their needs. Needs cover a wide spectrum, including speech and communication difficulties, autism, specific learning difficulties, physical difficulties and both moderate and severe learning difficulties. All pupils speak English as their first language and there are very few representatives of minority ethnic backgrounds. Movement of pupils in and out of the school is below average. The attainment of pupils on entry to the school is wide ranging but is usually a little above average, overall.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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20404	Mr J Evans	Team inspector	English Art and design Music
16971	Mr R Hardaker	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History
17681	Mr R Sharples	Team inspector	Design and technology Physical education Foundation Stage Special educational needs

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a very good school that promotes very good achievement for all of its pupils. A strong Catholic community ethos promotes the development of pupils' personal qualities very well. Standards are well above average because teaching is very good. The school is highly committed to including all its pupils in all activities and provides very well for those with special educational needs. Leadership and management are very good and promote ongoing improvement. The costs per pupil are very low and the school provides excellent value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Achievement in science is high and is being further enhanced by the school's partnership with other schools in a learning network.
- Whilst achievement in information and communication technology (ICT) is good overall, pupils do not achieve enough in control technology.
- Provision for the children in the Foundation Stage is very good overall, but that for outdoor play limits children's independent choice to access outdoor activities.
- Leadership and management by the headteacher and key staff are very good. The school is constantly striving to improve provision and raise standards.
- The use of assessment is very good; pupils understand their personal targets and are well informed on what they need to do to improve.
- The school makes very good provision to develop pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This promotes excellent relationships and pupils become mature and responsible young people.

There has been very good improvement on the only main issue identified in the previous inspection in May 1999. As a result, not only has achievement for higher attainers improved in mathematics but for all groups of pupils in English, mathematics and science. Results of national tests at the end of Year 6 have risen faster than nationally.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	A*	A	A	A
mathematics	A*	A	A	A
science	A	A	A*	A

Key: A - in the top 5% of schools; 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.*

Achievement is very good. Pupils achieve very well in the reception classes and most are on course to achieve the Early Learning Goals¹ set for them, with a good proportion exceeding them. Pupils continue to achieve very well in Years 1 to 6, which means that standards are well above average by the end of Year 6, although pupils could achieve more in the control technology aspect of ICT. Standards are above average by the end of Year 2. This is reflected in the consistently high results in national tests in English, mathematics and

¹ The Early Learning Goals are the targets set for children by the end of the reception year.

science at the end of Year 6, shown in the table above. Results are often in the top five per cent of schools nationally. **The promotion of pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is very good** and is firmly rooted in the school's Catholic faith. Pupils behave very well and have very good attitudes to school. Attendance is above average and punctuality is very good; this reflects pupils' enthusiasm for learning.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is very good. Teaching is very good and the use of specialist teachers enhances learning for pupils, particularly in physical education and Spanish. Assessment is very good and teachers use assessment information very well to match work to the needs of all groups of pupils, particularly in English, mathematics and science. Strong relationships between teachers and their pupils give pupils confidence in their work. Pupils are managed very positively and the interesting lessons promote enjoyment in learning. Teachers give very good feedback to pupils so that they understand how well they are achieving and how they can improve their work.

The curriculum is very good and meets all statutory requirements. It is greatly enriched by a very wide range of clubs, visits and expert visitors. Whilst the accommodation is good overall, Years 5 and 6 classrooms are small and the lack of a separate secure outdoor area for the reception classes limits children's ability to make independent choices about outdoor play. There are good partnerships with parents and very productive partnerships with other schools and the community. The recent partnership project with other nearby schools is also providing very good enrichment of pupils' learning experiences. The school provides a good standard of care for its pupils and provides them with very good personal and academic guidance and support.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good. The leadership of the headteacher and key staff is very good and there is a very clear view of what must be done to help the school improve further. Management is very good. The school analyses assessment information thoroughly to identify and act upon any weaknesses and this is effective in improving provision and pupils' achievement. Governance is good; governors play an active part in school life and meet most of their statutory requirements, although there are a few omissions in the information to parents.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Most parents have very positive views of the school and particularly appreciate the strong ethos that promotes confidence and maturity in their children. Pupils also have very positive views about school and have confidence in their teachers.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The school has no major areas to address but in order to improve further should:

- Raise achievement in pupils' knowledge and understanding of control technology.
- Improve provision for outdoor play for the reception class, so that the children can make independent choices about their activities.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Achievement is **very good** throughout the school. Standards are **well above average** by the end of Year 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement in the Foundation Stage is very good in all areas of learning².
- Standards are well above average in English, mathematics, science and Spanish by the end of Year 6.
- Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are above average overall, but pupils should achieve more in control technology.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well because of the quality of provision.

Commentary

1. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve very well in all areas of learning and standards are above average in each area by the time they enter Year 1. Whilst children achieve very well in physical development, the lack of a secure outdoor area limits their opportunities to make choices about their play activities.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2004

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.7 (17.8)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	14.1 (15.3)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	18.5 (17.5)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 83 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. Pupils achieve very well and standards are above average overall by the end of Year 2. Standards are well above average in reading and above average in mathematics and writing. This reflects an improvement in the results of the national tests in 2004 shown in the table above because the school recognised that pupils could achieve more in writing. Action taken has resulted in a very good improvement. Above average standards have been maintained and improved upon since the previous inspection, because the school uses its data well to identify and rectify weaknesses.
3. Pupils achieve very well in science and standards are well above average by the end of Year 2, with most pupils achieving the level expected and a well above average proportion of pupils exceeding it. This is because the school provides many practical opportunities for pupils to learn at first hand by observing and experimenting for themselves. Standards in ICT are above average and pupils develop good levels of competence and confidence in using computers.

² The six areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage are social, personal and emotional development; communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; creative development and physical development.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2004

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	30.0 (29.1)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	29.9 (29.2)	27.0 (26.8)
science	31.7 (30.5)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 65 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

- Standards in English, mathematics and science in Year 6 are currently well above average, overall, and largely reflect the results of the national tests in 2004, shown in the table above. Standards and achievement in science are high and the TOBA partnership³ is having a positive impact through improving teachers' skills in questioning, to make pupils think very deeply about their work. There has been good improvement in standards and achievement since the previous inspection because of improvements in the quality of teaching and learning. Work is matched better to the needs of all groups of pupils and the underachievement of higher attaining pupils noted then in mathematics has been rectified. Pupils' very good attitudes to learning and the good support given by parents also make a strong contribution to pupils' achievements.
- Over time, the school has been very successful in raising test results at a faster rate than those nationally. This is a remarkable achievement in a school where standards are already high and is a result of the very good quality of teaching, learning and assessment, combined with effective revision programmes and booster classes. However, there is a natural yearly variation in year groups that is likely to have some impact on test results in 2005, with fewer higher achievers in the current Year 6 group. The school was successful in exceeding its targets in English and mathematics in 2004 and is on course to achieve, or even exceed, the realistic ones set for the current year.
- Standards in ICT are above average overall by the end of Year 6. Pupils achieve well and apply their skills well in research and recording in other subjects. However, they do not achieve enough in control technology. The school has recognised this and has plans to develop this aspect further.
- Standards in physical education are above average by the end of Years 2 and 6 and some individual, talented pupils achieve very high standards because of the quality of provision. Standards in Spanish are above average by the end of Year 2 and well above average by the end of Year 6. Pupils achieve well in geography and standards are above average by the end of Year 6. There was insufficient evidence to make overall judgements on achievement or standards in art and design, design and technology, history or music by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 or in geography by the end of Year 2. Work seen in history was of above average standard and that seen in art and design was at least satisfactory with some individual examples of above average work. Singing heard during the inspection was of above average standard.
- Pupils with special educational needs are provided with well-targeted support that enables them to take a full part in lessons and helps them achieve very well. The school provides well for pupils who are potentially high attainers and their achievement is also very good. There is no specific extra provision for them, other than small

³ The TOBA Network is a partnership between a group of schools in Tarleton, Ormskirk, Burscough and Aughton formed to promote improvements in the quality of education through an innovative approach.

booster classes prior to Year 6 tests, but teachers use assessment information very well to plan work to meet their needs. No pupils have English as an additional language; the very few pupils from dual heritage backgrounds achieve at the same very good rate as other pupils.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **very good** and a strength of the school. Provision for pupils' personal development, including provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is **very good**. The level of attendance is above average and pupils' punctuality is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school promotes pupils' behaviour very well.
- The school fosters pupils' excellent relationships with others very well.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to school life, attend regularly and are very punctual.
- Adults promote pupils' spiritual, social and moral development very well. This is very effective in developing in pupils a strong awareness of their responsibilities for living in a community.

Commentary

9. The headteacher and all adults in the school make their very high expectations of behaviour clear to pupils. Staff constantly promote the importance of appropriate behaviour and provide ample opportunities to reward pupils' efforts and success, such as in assemblies. As a result, pupils are polite, courteous and respectful of others. They are confident in the presence of visitors and very well mannered. There have been no exclusions in recent years. Because of the school's very good ethos and the value that it places on good relationships, pupils get on very well with each other and with the adults in the school. They mix happily together at playtimes and collaborate closely in lessons, spontaneously applauding the efforts and performances of others. There is an excellent level of respect and trust between staff and pupils.
10. Pupils' high level of interest in the school's wide range of additional activities, such as after-school clubs, contributes well to their very good attitudes to school life. Above all they enjoy the strong community feeling that the school provides, and the sense of belonging. They display an obvious pride in their school; this was very clearly illustrated in a school assembly to celebrate the very good achievements of pupils, such as in a range of team sports' events. Attendance levels are good and punctuality is very good, which reflects pupils' enthusiasm for school. Parents respond well to the school's strong promotion of the importance of regular attendance.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.4	School data	0.0
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

11. Adults promote pupils' social development very well through, for example, ample opportunities to discuss their own feelings and those of others. Pupils learn to respect the thoughts and sensitivities of others. They develop a very good awareness of their moral responsibilities and soon have a very clear idea about the difference between right and wrong. The school actively promotes pupils' understanding of their own culture and the cultural traditions of others. High quality learning activities ensure that there are plenty of opportunities for spiritual reflection and chances to experience 'awe

and wonder'. For example, in an excellent Year 4 science lesson, pupils were amazed at the outcomes of their investigations to produce electrical circuits that created a range of effects.

12. The provision to prepare pupils to be responsible citizens is very good and they develop a very good awareness of their responsibilities for living in a community. The ideas of the school council are taken seriously and the school acts on their recommendations. As a result, pupils feel that their ideas are valued and that they have a genuine say in the running of the school. For instance, the members of the council organise counselling sessions for younger pupils and successfully submitted a proposal for funding for a skipping club to promote healthy living.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is **very good**. Teaching, learning and assessment are **very good** and promote pupils' academic and personal development very well. The curriculum is **very good** and there are very good opportunities for enrichment. The standard of care is **good** and pupils receive very good academic and personal support and guidance. There is a **good** partnership with parents, most of whom who have very positive views of the school. The school has **good** links with the community and **very good** links with other schools.

Teaching and learning

Teaching, learning and assessment are **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers plan interesting lessons, using a variety of resources and effective methods to engage and sustain pupils' interest.
- Teachers make very good use of assessment information and plan work well to meet the needs of all groups of pupils.
- Excellent relationships between staff and pupils give pupils confidence and help them achieve well.
- Pupils' very positive attitudes and behaviour make a strong contribution to learning.
- Very good use of support staff provides for the full inclusion of all pupils.
- Assessment, including marking and the setting of individual learning targets, is very good and helps pupils to understand how to improve their work.
- Recent innovations are further improving the quality of teaching.

Commentary

13. During the inspection almost all teaching observed was at least good and there was no unsatisfactory teaching. In half of lessons observed, teaching was very good, with two excellent lessons seen. Examples of very good teaching were observed in each year group and particularly good teaching was seen in English, science and physical education and in the Foundation Stage.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 48 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
2 (4%)	22 (46%)	20 (42%)	4 (8%)	0	0	0

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

14. Teaching for the children in the reception class is very good. Basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught very well, so that children are prepared for their work in the National Curriculum. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and make excellent use of the assessment information to match work to the needs of all groups of children and to check that all are making good progress. Lessons are interesting and practical and there is a very good focus on developing pupils' personal, emotional and social skills and their range of vocabulary.
15. Teaching in Years 1 to 6 is very good overall and particularly so in English, science, physical education and Spanish. In Years 2 to 6, the quality of teaching is enhanced by the use of specialist teachers in Spanish and, in Years 3 to 6, specialist teaching in physical education is of very good quality. Teachers have good subject knowledge and they apply this very well in planning interesting lessons, with a good balance of teacher instruction, pupil discussion and independent practical and written tasks. These lessons capture pupils' imagination and motivate them to work hard. Opening sessions are very successful; all topics and lessons have clear learning targets, which are shared with pupils so that they know what they are expected to learn and can focus clearly on this when working on their tasks. The use of interactive computerised whiteboards is very effective in engaging and maintaining pupils' attention, particularly when they are involved in its use. The end session of lessons is used very well to review what has been learned and staff often involve pupils in reflecting on and evaluating their own success.
16. Adults provide excellent models of relationships and teamwork and manage their classes in a very positive manner. Pupils respond very well and develop full confidence in attempting new work and sharing their views with others. Pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour make a significant contribution to learning. They enjoy many productive opportunities to engage in discussion and investigation within their groups.
17. Teaching for pupils with special educational needs is very good and fully reflects the school's commitment to including all pupils in all aspects of school life. Activities in lesson are very well matched to their needs because of the very good planning of individual learning targets. Support staff are well informed about their target pupils and groups, and are deployed very well. Pupils are supported very well and take a full part in all lesson activities. For example, in a Year 5 science lesson, a pupil with special educational needs used a specially adapted recorder to demonstrate to the class how the sound can be changed. A part-time specialist support teacher provides some good support for pupils and advice for teachers.
18. The innovative TOBA partnership is further improving the quality of teaching by enhancing staff expertise in understanding different pupils' preferred ways of learning and how to provide for these different styles. The initial focus is on science and the detailed joint planning of topics and lessons between teachers and schools is very successful in improving the quality of independent learning. It is very also very effective in promoting very good quality questioning, to challenge pupils' thinking and develop their understanding.
19. Assessment is very good overall and that in the reception classes is of excellent quality. Information is very well used to rectify any weaknesses and ensure that all groups of pupils make consistent progress as they move through the school. Marking

is very good; it informs pupils how well they have succeeded and what they need to do to improve. Personal learning targets in English and mathematics support this well as they are regularly reviewed and updated. The very positive climate created enables pupils to evaluate their own work and that of others constructively, which also helps them understand how well they are succeeding. There are very good procedures for checking the progress of pupils with special needs as they move through the school.

The curriculum

Curriculum provision is **very good**, meeting all requirements. **Very good** opportunities are provided to extend learning outside of lessons. Resources to support learning are **good** and the school is making the best use of its **good** accommodation.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Learning opportunities in the reception classes are very good and give children a very good start to school life.
- Very good learning experiences prepare pupils well for secondary education.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good so they achieve very well.
- Very good enrichment opportunities contribute to pupils' personal development and help to broaden their experiences.
- Opportunities to extend learning outside the classroom are very good, especially in sport where provision is excellent and is a strength of the school.
- Recent curriculum innovation is making learning more enjoyable, interesting, exciting and meaningful for the pupils.

Commentary

20. The curriculum for the reception classes is very good; it excites the children and is very relevant to their needs. It gives them a very good start to their formal education. The youngest children settle into school quickly and make very good progress with their learning as they experience a very good range of interesting opportunities to play, explore and practise. As a result they achieve very well and are very well prepared for Year 1. They are taught in a very stimulating environment and benefit from a good range of learning resources, which helps their understanding and adds interest to activities. However, the outdoor area is not secure enough to allow pupils to make independent decisions about when and where to play. There are firm plans in place to improve this situation. The very effective adult support that is provided makes a significant contribution to their learning. All adults in these classes work very effectively as a team.
21. Curriculum provision in Years 1 to 6 is very good and is supported by a good range of resources. Whilst the accommodation is good overall, rooms for Years 5 and 6 are small. Provision is particularly strong in English, science and physical education. For example, pupils are given many opportunities to investigate and find things out for themselves in science and this helps develop their curiosity. Specialist teaching in physical education is contributing to the standards pupils attain in this subject. The curriculum in mathematics, art and design and history is good. A strong feature of the mathematics curriculum is the emphasis given to problem solving, with ample opportunities for pupils to apply their often very good mathematical skills in a practical context. This makes a significant contribution to their very good achievement. The teaching of Spanish to pupils in Years 2 to 6 further broadens the curriculum and

widens pupils' experiences. Children in Year 6 are very well prepared to start their secondary education as most attain very good standards in English, mathematics and science, and develop independence and very positive attitudes to learning. The school also prepares them well as people through the very good provision made for their personal, social and health education and citizenship. Teachers generally make positive efforts to enhance pupils' self-esteem and raise levels of maturity. Much work in classes focuses on encouraging pupils to adopt a healthy and safe lifestyle. Within this context sex education and knowledge of the dangers associated with the misuse of drugs are taught sensitively, linked closely to pupils' work in religious education.

22. Provision for children with special educational needs is very good, enabling them to fully participate in all aspects of learning. Lesson planning is a strong feature of the very good teaching seen in classrooms and considerable care goes into selecting activities that appropriately meet the learning needs of these pupils.
23. The school provides a very good and varied programme of activities outside normal school time. There are excellent opportunities for pupils to participate in sports activities and pupils represent their school in many team and individual events, with considerable success. Specialist training and coaching are available in a number of sports, from football to fencing in very well attended sessions. There are also good opportunities for pupils to take part in a range of arts' activities. For example, pupils sing together in the school choir and work very hard to attain high standards in choral singing. As a consequence of this, the school choir was recently honoured to participate with the BBC singers in a piece called *Weaving the Web*, which was performed at the Guild Hall in Preston. Pupils enthusiastically support these and many other activities, such as science and ICT clubs. A programme of visits out of school and visitors to school makes a very good contribution to children's learning and to their personal, social and cultural development.
24. Teachers are participating enthusiastically with teachers from other primary schools in the TOBA network, to explore ways to make learning and teaching more relevant and effective. This is having a number of very positive repercussions on teaching and learning, particularly in science. An exciting innovation is the introduction of video technology, giving teachers and pupils the ability to link up with classes in other schools and experts further afield, such as a potter in Cumbria. This is broadening pupils' experience beyond their own classroom and enabling them to share ideas, learning and feelings. Another important development is the focus teachers are placing on the development of pupils' thinking skills. In some lessons, pupils are challenged to think in depth about the consequences of their actions in a range of situations. In response to such challenges, pupils are developing confidence in their capacity to think for themselves and a greater understanding of others' points of view.

Care, guidance and support

Provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is **good**, overall. The support, advice and guidance that pupils receive are **very good**. Staff listen **well** to pupils' views and take them into account.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good systems are in place to ensure the well-being, health and safety of pupils but not all risk assessments are formally recorded.

- Pastoral care and the promotion of pupils' development are good. However, lunchtime records are insufficient to support the monitoring and critical evaluation of provision.
- The very good levels of advice, help and guidance with their work and personal development enable pupils to make substantial progress.
- Staff consult with pupils and involve them well in developing the work of the school.
- There are good arrangements to help settle children into school and to prepare them for the next stages of their education.

Commentary

25. The school places high priority on the personal well-being of its pupils. All staff, including those who work in the office, work well to achieve this. All staff show a good level of care, well supported by training, with senior staff taking a very good lead. Pupils find staff approachable and almost all say they have an adult to turn to should the need arise. Child protection procedures are good; they have recently been updated and meet all requirements.
26. Effective health and safety arrangements meet statutory requirements and ensure that staff and pupils work in a safe environment because most potential health and safety issues are identified through the school's procedures. These include regular assessments of the premises; most records show either that issues have been resolved or that progress is being made towards a resolution. Formal risk assessments cover the curriculum and visits made out of school. Others covering the use of the school grounds are done informally and findings are not, therefore, recorded. This means that any precautions taken cannot be successfully tested or evaluated.
27. Parents are pleased with the arrangements to help children settle into the caring family atmosphere. The youngest children have a gentle introduction to starting school and the school has this year adapted its Year 1 curriculum to ease the transfer from the Foundation Stage curriculum to the demands of the National Curriculum. Year 2 pupils are very well prepared to move on because of the good learning and behaviour habits they acquire whilst in the infants. This situation is mirrored in Year 6 and pupils are very well prepared for graduation into Year 7.
28. Teachers and classroom support staff understand each pupil and take into account their personal circumstances, capabilities and special needs when lessons are planned, so additional support in class can be provided where appropriate. Teachers do not always, however, have the fullest account of their pupils' experiences at lunchtime because of inconsistencies in reporting procedures, which mean that, except in the most serious instances, they are passed on orally to the midday manager. This system does not guarantee that communication systems are as successful as they could be on this complex site.
29. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, receive very well focused academic support and this builds their confidence in their own achievements and accelerates progress. This is because consistent and very detailed monitoring is supported by accurate target setting and marking which provides very good guidance towards improvements. Parents are justifiably happy with the guidance their children receive and the standards they attain. Pupils themselves indicate that teachers "help them lots" with their work and value their best efforts very highly.

30. Pupils are regularly consulted using a published scheme, which is then reliably analysed for future reference. This allows the school to have a finger on the pulse, to be aware of pupils' emotional needs and work to meet them. Pupils' views are taken into account and the school council is growing into its role as a conduit for pupils' views heard during Wednesday's 'Worry Club'. Additionally the approachability of all staff and quality of relationships enable the school to get to know pupils' wants and needs. 'Circle time' lessons are often used well to test pupils' perceptions and demonstrate how they can influence others into maintaining the school's positive ethos.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents and the community are **good** overall and support pupils' learning and development well. Links with other schools are **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents make a very good contribution to children's learning and most support the school enthusiastically.
- Good and meaningful information is provided for parents about most aspects of its work but details about pastoral policies are not easily accessible.
- The school is firmly embedded within the local community, which enriches pupils' personal development.
- Strong liaison with other schools enhances provision for pupils and eases the transition process.

Commentary

31. Links between the school and parents are close and mutually supportive. Parents are keen for their children to do well and the majority do their very best to help. For instance, they ensure their children attend school each day, arrive in a good frame of mind and complete homework tasks. The parents' association is generously supported and valued for the social activity it promotes. In addition, some parents help in school during the day; this not only helps teachers and pupils but has also helped some parents to gain professional qualifications.
32. The school considers its relationship with parents is a strong feature and this was borne out by the 170 responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire and by the parents attending the meeting held to ascertain their views. Inspectors find that there is very little parents would like to change. However, a few are not so satisfied with lunchtime arrangements and think that the level of supervision at these times is too low. More express some concern about the extent to which their views are sought and acted upon. These were carefully looked into and the inspection finds that parents' concerns are not substantiated. Capable, well-briefed midday assistants provide good care and first-aid. However, accurate records are not routinely kept to evidence all the support provided and keep parents informed.
33. Whilst communication and information about the curriculum, pupils' progress and how to help children at home are very comprehensive and highly detailed, there are shortfalls. For example, parents simply do not know enough about the school's procedures and policies to be conversant about them or confident in their implementation. This is because information about daily care practices and important

procedures, such as those for Child Protection, is not readily available, either in the prospectus or in newsletters.

34. Procedures for seeking parents' views are good and have influenced some features of school life, such as the development of a Travel Plan. Parents are actively encouraged, through newsletters, to make contact with teachers who in turn operate a very effective 'open door' policy. To its credit, the school is aware of the parents' desire for more information and is planning a more cost-effective way of providing this because it recognises that the prospectus and annual report of governors have shortcomings. Policies, events and very useful links to educational sites are published on the school's website. This is nearing completion and provides parents with a more accurate and positive picture about provision.
35. Pupils benefit from a very good range of community contacts through residential trips and local visits. They support the community in many ways, such as by extensive fund raising. Links with the church and its parish are particularly strong and mutually supportive. A wide range of visitors contributes much to school life, such as the representatives from the emergency services who tell pupils about their roles in society.
36. Ties with other schools are very substantial. Staff from several schools share in joint training and activities to establish best practice and share common interests. These links are a highly positive factor in moving the school forward, especially with its strategy for science and developing appropriate styles of teaching and learning.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **very good, overall**. The governance of the school is **good** and statutory requirements are met.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The leadership of the headteacher is very good.
- The deputy headteacher and other key staff make a very effective contribution to the work of the school. There is a shared commitment to high standards and achievement.
- Information about pupils' attainment is used very well to plan for improvement.
- Management is very effective.
- Governors provide valuable support and constructive challenge.

Commentary

37. The headteacher provides knowledgeable, innovative leadership. She inspires the pursuit of quality in all areas of the school's work. Her clear vision and successful commitment to high standards are reflected in the very good results that pupils achieve and their very good attitudes to learning. The breadth of her vision is reflected in the richness of curriculum opportunities that the school provides. Her leadership unites teaching and non-teaching staff very effectively, multiplying the value of each member's contribution and generating powerful teamwork that drives the success of the school. Excellent relationships prevail at all levels and the ethos of the school is strongly inclusive.

38. The deputy headteacher provides very effective support to the headteacher and makes an important contribution to planning, management and the quality of teaching and learning. Subject leaders are knowledgeable and strongly committed to high standards. Their very effective leadership is a key factor in the very good results that pupils achieve. Very good use is made of teachers' specialist skills and knowledge, for example in art and design, Spanish and physical education. Teaching staff and classroom assistants set strong examples of close co-operation, which influence pupils in their own work and relationships, and benefits their learning and personal development. Teachers are closely involved in making decisions and evaluating their effectiveness. This collegiate approach, in which teaching and non-teaching staff work to clear, common goals, exchange ideas, share expertise and support one other, is a strength of the school. Pupils, too, feel themselves to be members of a united community because they are valued as individuals and their achievements are accorded respect.
39. Teachers are skilled and objective in evaluating the school's performance. They are proud of its accomplishments and resolute in tracking down what needs to be improved. Very good use is made of educational data, including the results of national tests and detailed records of pupils' attainments. This enables teachers to identify strengths and areas for action. Subject leaders are closely involved in the good arrangements for joint planning, which enables them to stay informed about the performance of pupils across the school. These arrangements would be strengthened further by more frequent monitoring of lessons and the school has plans to do this.
40. The headteacher's management is imaginative and flexible, perceptive in targeting areas of need, prompt and thoughtful in devising ways of responding to them. A good example of this is seen in the way English groups have been designed in Year 2, to allow a sharper focus on writing skills for identified pupils. Improvement planning is practical and sufficiently detailed. Membership of the core management team is varied to reflect current priorities. This helps at the planning stage and with implementation. Induction procedures for new staff are very good and the school makes a very good contribution to teacher training.
41. The governing body is fully involved in determining the vision and direction of the school and carries out its statutory duties well. Governors draw on a good range of educational, financial and other relevant expertise. They know the school's strengths and priorities for improvement very well and their contribution to planning is thorough and well informed. Governors are strongly supportive of the school and value its role within the wider community. At the same time, they challenge senior staff effectively, testing their proposals. Governors actively seek ways to improve their own effectiveness and respond to the school's needs, for example by re-organising their committee structure. They carefully evaluate their own performance and give careful attention, in all aspects of planning, to the principles of best value.
42. Approaches to financial planning and control are meticulous and secure. Spending priorities are tightly linked with the aspects of educational provision identified for improvement. In this, governors, key staff and the school bursar work closely and effectively together, drawing on additional expert support from the local authority. Whilst the financial information in the table below indicates a large carry-forward figure, a high proportion of it is already committed to improving the accommodation further. Given the unusually low costs per pupil and the very good results it achieves, the school gives excellent value for money.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	1017531
Total expenditure	1027108
Expenditure per pupil	2100

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	100433
Balance carried forward to the next year	90855

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

43. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is very good. Most children have attended the nursery that is based at the school. The very good liaison that exists between the two groups ensures that there is a smooth transfer as children enter the reception classes.
44. The quality of teaching is very good in all areas of learning in all three reception classes. This is reflected in the enthusiasm and enjoyment that the children show for all the activities, the very good levels of achievements of all groups of children and the above average standards in all areas of learning. Almost all children achieve the learning targets set for the end of the reception year and many exceed them. Activities are well matched to the children's needs and are presented in a very stimulating way. Teachers' planning and the methods of recording children's progress are excellent and the planning of the same topic across the classes is very effective in ensuring that all children have similar meaningful learning experiences. All staff work very well as a team and are fully involved in the preparation of the activities and in the monitoring of children's progress. They provide excellent role models for children.
45. The leadership and management of this team are very good and have promoted good improvement since the previous inspection. The accommodation is good overall and the outdoor area has improved since the previous inspection, when there was insufficient provision for outdoor play. However, this is shared with the infant classes and whilst staff plan good opportunities for groups to work outside at certain times, it is too open to allow children to play outdoors whenever they choose to do so. This inhibits independent learning, particularly in the areas of physical and creative development. However, firm plans exist to improve this situation by creating a separate secure area.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make very good progress in developing their personal, social and emotional skills and show a keen enthusiasm for the challenges provided by new and exciting experiences.
- The very good support and encouragement provided by staff ensure that all children develop confidence in their learning and social interaction.
- There are very good opportunities to develop independent learning skills.

Commentary

46. Staff set clear boundaries and provide positive role models so that all children know what is expected of them and understand how to behave. Children listen very well to instructions and develop a clear understanding of what they should do. They discuss their ideas and listen to others, learning to express their opinions and give others time to speak without interruption. They are very confident in speaking in front of other

children because of the well-planned opportunities provided by teachers. For example, in a Class 3 'show and tell' session individual children related different personal experiences and answered questions from the rest of the class. The staff work very hard to plan exciting and stimulating experiences and the children respond to these with high levels of concentration and a real interest in and enthusiasm for learning.

47. Staff have high expectations and provide very good support in activities and this is successful in raising the children's confidence to attempt new tasks. The very supportive relationships ensure that the children feel secure and confident to seek help when required and the very good use of a 'buddy' system with Year 6 pupils at lunchtimes offers the opportunity for the children to relate to other members of the school community. The very positive atmosphere in the classes is one in which children feel free and confident to explore and succeed.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers and support staff take every opportunity to develop the children's language skills.
- Children develop very good reading and writing skills.

Commentary

48. Very good teaching in lessons provides children with excellent opportunities to develop their early language skills. The teachers ask challenging questions to extend children's knowledge. Children's vocabulary is developed well through asking searching questions and an insistence that the children listen to the contributions of others. The teacher reads stories with expression and excitement, raising children's interest in books, reading and stories. The children learn to recognise the sounds of different letters to assist them in their reading and writing.
49. There are good examples of the children's writing in the excellent range of displays in the classrooms and in the detailed records that are kept of their work. Higher attaining children write independently and make very good attempts at spelling words. There are many very good examples of children's free writing based on a weekly planned practical experience, for example a pet hunt around the school grounds.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are provided with a very firm base of mathematical skills.
- Every opportunity is taken to develop children's mathematical skills in all their learning activities.

Commentary

50. The very good planning of lessons ensures that all children are taught the necessary basic skills on which to develop their future mathematical knowledge and understanding. A large number of children order numbers from 1 to 10 and higher attaining children identify missing numbers in a sequence from 1 to 20. Children apply their skills very well in other activities. For example, they have produced bar graphs representing the different ways children travel to school as part of their transport topic. Teachers make very good use of singing rhymes to reinforce the concepts of number recognition, counting and ordering.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children experience a very good range of interesting activities to promote the extension of their learning into a wider context.
- Children are confident in the use of the computer.

Commentary

51. Activities are carefully and imaginatively planned. Children's curiosity is stimulated and this helps to widen their understanding and learning of the environment outside their homes and the school. Good use is made of visits and visitors to enhance their experiences outside the classroom. As part of their study of pets, the children develop an understanding of the conditions that different animals require to live and of the role of a vet. Children have been taught about the Chinese New Year and understand that different animals represent specific years. Children are very confident in the use of the computer and access a wide range of programs. These are used very effectively to support the learning in all areas of the curriculum.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are provided with a good range of activities to promote their physical development.
- The lack of a secure outside area restricts children's freedom of choice in play activities.

Commentary

52. Very well structured physical education lessons are very effective in developing children's strength and co-ordination. They understand the need to warm up before commencing exercises and that their heart rate increases during the lesson. Because of the teachers' high expectations children perform very good quality movements on the floor and the apparatus. Children make good progress in the development of their finer motor skills because of the well-planned range of activities, for example cutting round the shapes of animals. They show good control in the competent and confident manner in which they control the mouse and access the keyboard to operate the computer. Teachers plan very well to ensure that children have many organised outdoor play experiences but children do not have the opportunity to exercise choice in when to play outdoors on activities of their own choice.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Role-play, art and music are used very effectively to promote the children's creative development.

Commentary

53. Music and singing are used very well to support the development of mathematical and communication skills. A wide range of activities promotes the artistic awareness and development of children, who confidently explore the use of colour and texture as they paint and construct models. They appreciate the work of famous artists and have

produced irises and sunflowers in the style of Van Gogh. Role-play areas are used very effectively to support learning on current themes, such as the veterinary surgery corner in the study of pets.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

English

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievement is very good and standards are rising more quickly than those nationally.
- Pupils' reading is strong, they listen and speak well and write competently.
- Teaching and learning are very good and teachers pay good attention to planning to develop language and literacy skills across the curriculum.
- Teachers make good use of assessment information to plan for improvement.
- Subject leadership is very good.

Commentary

54. Standards by the end of Year 2 are now greatly improved from the tests results of 2004 and are above average. The results of national tests for Year 2 pupils showed considerable variation in the different aspects of English in 2004. Whilst pupils' reading was well above average, results for writing were below the expected level and well below those of similar schools. Teachers also assessed Year 2 pupils' speaking and listening as being below average. The improvement reflects teachers' careful targeting of weaknesses identified within pupils' writing and the very good quality of teaching generally.
55. Since the last inspection, standards for Year 6 pupils have improved and are now well above average. In particular, a higher proportion of pupils now exceeds the expected level. The results of national tests are consistently well above average and reflect current standards for Year 6 pupils. The school exceeded its targets in the tests in 2004 and its current targets are likely to be met. All groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve very well through the school.
56. In all parts of the school, pupils' reading is the strongest element of their English. Infant and junior pupils read confidently and accurately for their age and show good understanding. Many pupils are very enthusiastic readers, devouring books of widely differing types and explaining their preferences clearly. The teaching of reading is very well organised and informed. Teachers draw on a very good knowledge of children's literature and choose books that stimulate and appeal to pupils' differing interests, thus engaging them effectively. Pupils' reading diaries help to ensure close contact between school and home. This is very effective in motivating pupils and promoting a valuable partnership in learning. Texts are very carefully matched to the needs and interests of each pupil, enabling pupils of different abilities to be accurately challenged and encouraging progress.
57. Infant and junior pupils listen attentively and accurately for their age. Teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to practise their speaking, for example in paired and group work and in the wider context of school assemblies. This builds pupils' confidence in speaking and extends their understanding of the demands of different

audiences. In conversation, both infant and junior pupils show very good awareness for their age of the needs of the listener. Older pupils match their answer very well to the situation and show, by their choice of words and tone of voice, their sensitivity to shades of meaning. They interact constructively with one another, taking turns in conversation, showing consideration and supporting one another well.

58. Most infant pupils express themselves clearly in their writing. They use capital letters and full stops with increasing consistency and usually spell straightforward words correctly or in a way that shows good knowledge of letter sounds. They write in logical sentences and choose words accurately. The higher attaining pupils write fluently for their age, begin to extend ideas in longer sentences and use a wider vocabulary. Junior pupils sustain ideas well in their writing and organise it thoughtfully to suit different purposes and audiences. Most junior pupils spell accurately and are developing a good practical understanding of punctuation. They use a suitably wide vocabulary and write with a fluent, well-formed, joined hand, presenting their work with great care and pride.
59. Teachers ensure that all pupils build versatility in their thinking and writing by writing in different forms and for different purposes. These include, for example, telling a story, arguing a point of view, expressing feelings in verse, or examining the qualities of a book they have studied. Teachers are skilled in making writing relevant to pupils' interests and providing experiences that ignite pupils' enthusiasm for words and ideas. Good examples of this are the 'beach party' that teachers arranged for infant pupils and the stories about the experiences of evacuees that Year 6 pupils compared. Although the range of pupils' writing is wide, there are few examples of truly imaginative writing. Teachers have identified this imbalance and have plans to redress it.
60. Teaching and learning are very good throughout the school as a whole and promote very good achievement. Relationships in lessons are constructive. Teachers treat pupils with warmth and respect, valuing them as individuals and recognising their contributions. This promotes very good attitudes to learning. Pupils are confident in expressing their ideas, eager to learn and considerate towards others. Lessons are purposeful and well planned and reflect high expectations. Teachers question thoughtfully and with a view to encouraging pupils to think for themselves. They draw on their close knowledge of individuals to challenge pupils at the level that is right for them. This improves pupils' reasoning, encourages independence and extends pupils' range of expression. In some lessons, teachers could do more to draw in a minority of pupils who listen carefully but do not volunteer answers.
61. Teachers track pupils' progress accurately and in detail. They set clear, appropriate targets for each group of pupils. This engages pupils successfully as partners in their own learning and helps to drive up standards. Marking is positive and effective, commending achievement and showing pupils, in helpful, practical terms, how they can improve. Teachers use assessment information very well to plan for improvement. A good example of this is the organisation of teaching groups in Year 2, which is carefully designed to improve aspects of pupils' writing. Results show that this has been very effective.
62. Subject leadership is very good. The subject leader draws on secure, wide-ranging subject knowledge and sets a very good example in her own teaching. Her work is complemented by the strong contributions of other teachers, for example in the field of

children's literature. It is underpinned by the cohesive teamwork and shared commitment to high standards that bind the school as a whole.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

63. There is good attention to the development of language and literacy skills in other subjects. This is seen in the many opportunities teachers provide for pupils to talk and write about their work, for example in science and history. These opportunities enable pupils to practise different styles of writing and to extend their vocabulary. Good examples are seen in pupils' writing up of their science investigations using correct terminology, and in history when they compare stories by different authors about the experience of an evacuee. Though some sound examples of the use of word-processing were seen during the inspection, the use of ICT in English is underdeveloped. Pupils' writing across the curriculum shows unswerving commitment to high standards of presentation and quality.

Spanish

It was possible only to sample Spanish during the inspection and no overall judgement on provision could be made. Other evidence shows that standards are above average by the end of Year 2 and well above average by the end of Year 6. In the one lesson seen, in Year 4, teaching was very good. A lively oral and physical approach created enthusiasm amongst pupils. They enjoyed a good range of games and practical activities and demonstrated confidence in speaking a range of numbers, greetings and simple phrases to the class.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most pupils are confident and competent mathematicians by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve very well.
- Teaching is good with some very good features and teachers plan many opportunities to develop skills in other subjects.
- Pupils are very keen to learn and enjoy their lessons.
- Assessment procedures are very good and used well.
- Improvement since the last inspection is good and major concerns have been fully addressed.

Commentary

64. In the national tests taken in 2004 at the end of Year 2, results were above the national average. These good standards have been maintained this year with pupils in the current Year 2 attaining above average standards in all areas of mathematics. This represents good achievement. In class these pupils show that they have a good understanding of the properties of a wide range of mathematical shapes. When shown examples, they quickly identify them and often name them correctly when given only verbal descriptions of their characteristics.

65. Pupils in Year 6 are achieving very well and attaining standards that are well above average in all areas of mathematics. In the national tests in 2004, pupils in last year's Year 6 attained at a slightly higher overall level but there is a natural variation between the year groups. In attaining their respective levels of attainment both groups made similar very good learning gains from the time they started school. Most Year 6 pupils move onto secondary schooling as competent mathematicians. Their understanding of number facts and their mathematical knowledge are good and they apply these well, with confidence, in a range of contexts, particularly in problem solving.
66. Pupils with special educational needs make very good learning gains and achieve very well because of very good support given to them in classrooms by teachers and learning support assistants. Teachers take especial care to plan learning activities that are well suited to the needs of these pupils. They regularly discuss with them the progress that they make and they encourage them by regularly setting appropriate and challenging learning targets. Those requiring individual learning plans are catered for well. As well as providing effectively for those with special educational needs, care is taken to plan appropriately for high attaining pupils. These pupils are being well challenged, both in the degree of difficulty of the tasks they are given and in the pace of work expected of them.
67. Teaching throughout the school is good, overall, with some strong features. A strong feature of the teaching seen in most classrooms is the very good quality of planning. In Years 4 to 6 pupils are organised in teaching groups formed on the basis of their levels of prior attainment and this arrangement is making a significant contribution to the good progress pupils make. Prior to the tests in Year 6, groups are even smaller, which allows staff to challenge pupils even more closely. Teachers endeavour to make lessons interesting and challenging and most make very good use of visual resources to help pupils' understanding as they try to grasp mathematical concepts. Pupils respond very well in classrooms; most work with great enthusiasm and display considerable keenness for the subject and this makes a considerable contribution to their achievement. When appropriate, pupils are encouraged to discuss their ideas with a partner. This practice makes a significant contribution to learning as, when struggling to understand a mathematical concept, this often helps them sort out their ideas and come to a better understanding.
68. The subject has been led and managed well over time to promote the good improvement that has been made since the last inspection, when concern was expressed that school was offering insufficient challenge to higher attaining pupils in Years 5 and 6. The school has effectively addressed this issue by:
- providing these pupils with more appropriate activities to do;
 - rearranging the teaching groups in Years 4 to 6, so that pupils of similar attainment levels are taught together;
 - improving assessment procedures, which are now very good and using the information very well for a variety of purposes, such as checking that all pupils make good progress and to identify any weaknesses in provision.
- Current leadership and management are at least satisfactory overall, but new co-ordinators have not yet had time and opportunity to gain a full overview of provision.

Mathematics across the curriculum

69. Pupils use mathematics frequently as part of their work in other subjects and this helps them to develop an appreciation of the practical uses of mathematical skills. For

example, they take measurements of length, time and volume in science and they use graphs and tables to record data in geography and science. In geography, Year 6 pupils use their knowledge of grids to locate position on Ordnance Survey maps. They are competent and confident in this work.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement and standards are high because very good teaching provides for interesting, often exciting, lessons.
- Teachers use assessment information very well to match work well to pupils' needs and are very skilled in questioning pupils to develop their scientific thinking.
- Pupils develop excellent enthusiastic attitudes to learning.
- Leadership is excellent and is promoting further improvement very well through the TOBA partnership.

Commentary

70. Pupils achieve very well and standards of work are well above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Most pupils achieve the level expected and many exceed this level, particularly in their scientific understanding and investigation. This reflects recent test results and is because of very good teaching. There is a sharp focus on pupils learning for themselves through observation and practical investigation and they develop a good bank of scientific information and a very good understanding.
71. Teachers have very good knowledge, of both the subject and their pupils, and use assessment information to match work well to pupils' needs. A particular strength is in the detailed planning of practical and interesting, often exciting, lessons, which stimulate a keen interest and enthusiasm for learning. Year group teachers plan together, with the support of the subject leader, and the quality of this planning is very good, ensuring that all pupils have similar learning experiences. It has recently been enhanced further through the links made with other schools in the TOBA partnership. Pupils have many opportunities for independent observation and investigation in collaboration with their classmates and teachers are skilled in questioning them to extend their thinking. For example, in an excellent lesson in Year 4, pupils worked in groups to apply their knowledge of electrical circuits to animate models made in numeracy, by adding features such as flashing eyes and spinning bow ties. They discussed eagerly and sensibly, amending their circuits to achieve the desired effect and noting the consequences of adding more features. They learned to rectify problems by using their numeracy skills to calculate how many additions they could make without burning out their batteries. The class teacher constantly challenged pupils by her questioning and insisted on explanations using correct scientific language.
72. Teachers have very high expectations of behaviour and pupils' responses are excellent. Pupils are attentive to what teachers have to say and listen well to each other's points of view. They work very hard because they are highly motivated to learn. Teachers give very good verbal feedback to pupils in lessons and encourage them to evaluate for themselves what they have learned. Work is marked well and pupils have

clear guidance on how well they have succeeded and what must be done to improve. Pupils' progress is tracked through the school to help all achieve their best.

73. Leadership and management of science are excellent. The school has made very good improvement in provision and standards since the last inspection. The recent partnership with TOBA is an exciting development, which is helping to promote improvement, not only in this school but in the rest of the partnership, through considering how pupils learn best and by sharing good practice in planning how to provide for this. This is to be extended still further though the use webcams to share scientific experiences. The school has very good systems to monitor the attainment and progress of its pupils. For example, the school became aware that girls were not achieving as well as boys by the end of Year 6 and took effective action so that both groups now achieve as well as each other.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well overall and are very confident in their use of computers.
- Pupils should achieve more in control technology.
- Teaching and learning are good and teachers provide good role models in their use of computers.
- Leadership and management are good.

Commentary

74. Inspection evidence shows that, as at the previous inspection, pupils are achieving well and current standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are a little above average, overall. However, pupils should achieve more in control technology by the end of Year 6. Although all the different aspects of the subject are taught, pupils have less experience of this aspect in Years 3 to 6 and standards are a little below average. The majority of pupils have access to computers at home, which supports their learning very well. Teachers provide very well for equal opportunities by considering pupils who do not have home computers. For example, they have additional access and are paired with higher attaining pupils who support them in practising the skills so that they too can achieve well. Pupils who have special educational needs receive good support that helps them make good progress.
75. Infant pupils confidently use programs to support their learning in literacy and numeracy and learn to enter data and text, using their good literacy skills. They control a floor robot and produce computer-generated art. By Year 6, pupils are competent handling data in many graphical forms and can transpose data into spreadsheet form for ease of analysis. They make good use of CD-ROMs and the Internet to locate information. Pupils are very familiar with email and some Year 6 pupils use this system to transfer some of their homework direct to school. For example, they have compiled autobiographies, partly in class and partly as homework, and mail it between the two locations.
76. The quality of teaching and learning is good. All staff have had recent training that has given them confidence and competence to teach the subject with conviction and skill.

They make good use of computers and interactive whiteboards in preparing and presenting their lessons, which provides a good role model for pupils. There is no separate computer suite, and in some classrooms very little space, and teachers have to plan very carefully to ensure that pupils have sufficient access to computers to practise the skills they learn in lessons. Pupils make good progress overall because of the good direct teaching of skills. For example, scrutiny of pupils' work shows that good skills in text and graphics are being developed from Year 1 so that by the time pupils reach Years 6 they independently put together a multi-media presentation, inserting animated clips, music and sound effects. As a result of the good teaching, most pupils are confident users of computers and work independently with a minimum of supervision. Behaviour and attitudes are very good and promote learning well.

77. Leadership and management are good and ensure that despite difficulties posed by the accommodation for the older pupils, all pupils have sufficient access to computers. The lunchtime computer club is effective in promoting good achievement for all pupils. At the club, a group of Year 6 pupils with good expertise is trained to take responsibility in supporting their classmates with any difficulties and train other year group 'experts' to help within their classes.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

78. There are many good links with other subjects that support learning well. Pupils show increasing confidence in using computers for different purposes as they move through the school. For example, they access programs and the Internet confidently to locate information on their topics in subjects such as history and write reports of their work on word-processors. They use computers particularly well in mathematics and science to record data and present it in the form of graphs.

HUMANITIES

Religious education is subject to a separate inspection by the diocese.

79. It was not possible to observe any lessons in **history** and, therefore, no judgements can be made on the quality of provision. Analysis of a small sample of pupils' work, discussion with a group of Year 6 pupils, and an examination of teachers' planning indicate that pupils experience a good range of learning opportunities. This evidence also indicates that standards are likely to be above average by the end of Year 6. Pupils in Year 6 have good recall of facts they learnt when studying several periods in history at various times in their school careers. World War 2 is the most recent topic they have studied and in discussion, some display good knowledge of European countries occupied during the Nazi invasion of Europe. They have particular understanding of events in Norway and Poland and recollect much of what they have learned about the experiences of those who were evacuated. They have read diaries to extract facts and feelings of people who lived through the war and have a good awareness of political conditions in this country between the two world wars. They have good knowledge of the Jarrow Crusade, some of it gleaned from the Internet.

Geography

Provision in geography is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well and standards are above average by the end of Year 6.
- Teaching is good.
- Learning makes a very good contribution to pupils' environmental awareness, citizenship and cultural development.
- Pupils work hard and enjoy lessons.

Commentary

80. Pupils achieve well and standards are above average by the end of Year 6. Year 6 pupils have good mapping skills and these include a good understanding of latitude and longitude. Given relevant information they use this knowledge effectively to locate countries on a globe. An examination of pupils' completed work and observation of three lessons suggests that the school is providing a good curriculum. There was insufficient evidence to make a fully informed judgement on standards and achievement by the end of Year 2, but work seen was at least satisfactory.
81. There is a good emphasis on environmental issues, which develops well through the school. For example, pupils in Year 1 develop interest in the immediate environment and use their good local knowledge to locate places and things on a simple map of the area around the school. They discuss ways in which attempts have been made to make the locality a safe place for children, such as the strategic positioning of a pedestrian crossing, and make their own suggestions as to how it might be made even safer. As pupils move through the school, studies widen to consider world issues. For example, Year 3 pupils have a good awareness of the problems associated with the disposal of unwanted products, such as fridges and mobile phones. Higher attaining pupils express a range of views on associated issues concerning the disposal of obsolete goods, with some beginning to understand the advantages to the environment of recycling. Year 6 pupils study the impact of man on the rainforest and link their work to music, art and drama. Pupils enjoy discussing environmental issues and they are developing a good awareness of them. This makes a significant contribution to the development of citizenship. Pupils study how people live in different countries, for example India. Recollecting their studies of this country in discussion, Year 6 pupils compared and contrasted the conditions under which they live with those experienced in different parts of the world. They contrasted the tortuous ways in which some people in India obtain drinking water with their own experience of simply turning on a tap. They also compared modes of transport in India with those in Ormskirk.
82. Teaching is good overall; the teaching and learning seen in all three lessons observed were good. Teachers use resources well to make lessons interesting and to bring the subject to life. For example, in a Year 3 lesson good use was made of video clips in order to impress on pupils the problem caused by the stockpiling of redundant household equipment and its subsequent disposal. In this and similar ways, geography makes a very good contribution to cultural development. In response to lively and interesting teaching, pupils work enthusiastically and enjoy their lessons. The subject is well managed and has maintained the good quality of provision noted at the previous inspection.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

83. Provision in art and design, design and technology and music could only be sampled and, therefore, no overall judgements made about the quality of provision. In **art and design**, Year 6 pupils recall a good range of different techniques and media that they have used to work in two and three dimensions. They show good understanding of how these can be applied to achieve different effects, for example, to achieve soft edges or a hard line. They recall the work of some different artists, such as Picasso and Kandinski, showing some insight into their approaches and techniques and how these developed over time. Pupils discuss with interest their recent visit to a local art gallery and comment thoughtfully on some features of the work they saw. Photographic evidence, attractively displayed, reflects a good range of artwork and

shows that teachers build pupils' skills in a well-planned way. In two parallel Year 6 lessons observed, pupils took obvious delight and pride in their work and demonstrated very good attitudes to learning. In these well-managed lessons, pupils used digital images of captured movement as the starting point for line drawings and prints, combining single images to show a sequence of movement. Attainment overall was in line with the expected levels. The task, though interesting and engaging, gave too little opportunity for pupils to make imaginative choices and, as a result, did not challenge the higher attainers enough. Subject leadership is good. Meaningful links are built between art and other subjects, for example English, where artwork is sometimes used effectively as a stimulus for writing. There is a good amount of artistic expertise amongst staff and this is shared well, helping to promote progress.

84. It is not possible to make a judgement about standards and achievement in **design and technology** as there were limited examples of pupils' work to be seen and no lessons were observed. However, there are indications that the recent initiative to introduce a nationally recognised scheme of work is having positive effects on the provision. Photographs of pupils' work show that they are involved well in the planning and production elements of design. A very good booklet, completed by Year 4 pupils, records their design ideas, production of different purses and evaluation of success.
85. Very little evidence was available for **music**. In conversation, Year 6 pupils remembered the *William Tell Overture* as an energetic piece of music and also recalled listening to some popular music from the 1970s and the 1940s. However, they showed little knowledge of different composers and could not recall composing any music of their own. Plans are being implemented to raise the quality of the teaching of music further. However, recorded evidence shows that pupils perform confidently and well in staged productions. In assembly, singing heard was good. For example, in one assembly older pupils sang confidently in two parts, with moving sensitivity and expression.

Physical education

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very good and promotes very good achievement.
- There is an excellent range of out-of-school activities to support learning.
- Leadership and management of the subject are good.

Commentary

86. Pupils achieve very well and standards are above average by the end of Years 2 and 6, with some talented pupils achieving very high standards. Specialist teachers and a part-time instructor are very knowledgeable about the subject and have very high expectations. Pupils are provided with a wide range of high quality activities in lessons, such as gymnastics, games, athletics and swimming. This results in very good levels of achievement and performance. High quality lessons commence with a very good warm-up session, when pupils are given detailed information on the reasons for the exercises. Throughout the lessons high quality coaching ensures that all pupils are fully involved and make every effort to perform to a very high standard. Pupils assess

their own performance and those of others in the class and suggest ways that they can improve.

87. Pupils are provided with an excellent range of opportunities at lunchtimes and before and after school to extend the skills they have been taught in lessons. The success that school teams have achieved in cricket, football and swimming competitions pays testimony to the quality of the coaching they have received. Pupils in Year 4 and 6 participate in residential visits to an outdoor centre, where they take part in a range of adventurous activities, for example canoeing and abseiling.
88. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The recently appointed co-ordinator has a good awareness of the development priorities of the subject, for example to introduce a system of recording the pupils' achievements in all areas of physical education.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

This aspect of learning was sampled, so no overall judgements can be made on the quality of teaching and learning. The school provides a very good curriculum to support the progressive development of pupils' skills and knowledge, in specific lessons and as part of other subjects. For example, pupils learn about the impact of a healthy lifestyle on their bodies in science. Studies are very closely linked to the religious education curriculum, through the Catholic scheme of work, "Here I am". In lessons such as citizenship and in class discussions, called 'circle time', pupils have very good opportunities to share ideas and talk about their experiences and feelings in a supportive and secure environment. Pupils listen to others with respect. There are suitable programmes for education about sex, relationships and misuse of drugs. Overall, most pupils develop a very good understanding of how their decisions affect their own and others' lives and learn to be responsible members of a community.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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