

INSPECTION REPORT

**OUR LADY STAR OF THE SEA CATHOLIC PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

Lytham St Annes, Lancashire

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119627

Headteacher: Miss J Hornby

Lead inspector: Mr David Carrington

Dates of inspection: 6th – 8th December 2004

Inspection number: 267456

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:	251
School address:	Kenilworth Road St Annes Lytham St Annes Lancashire
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Telephone number:	01253 726015
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr S Riley
Date of previous inspection:	11 th January 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Our Lady Star of the Sea Catholic Primary School has 131 boys and 120 girls and is an average sized primary school. It is located a short way inland at Lytham St Annes, which is three miles south of Blackpool in Lancashire. Most of the pupils come from the parish, which covers an extensive area.

The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is below average. Most of these pupils are supported for moderate learning difficulties and social and emotional needs. There is an above average proportion of pupils with statements. There are very few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. An average proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language. Most pupils spend their whole primary education at the school, though a few join or leave part way through it. The attainment of children when they start school is broadly average, though there is a small number of pupils who have just above average levels of skill and knowledge.

The school places its Catholic mission of *You are precious in my eyes* at the centre of its work to ensure that all pupils meet their potential in full.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
15414	Mr David Carrington	Lead inspector	Mathematics Geography History
10965	Mrs Pat Edwards	Lay inspector	
25074	Mrs Joyce Cox	Team inspector	English Art and design Design and technology Personal, social and health education and citizenship
8710	Mrs Julie Moore	Team inspector	Music French Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage English as an additional language
20007	Mr Trevor Neat	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Physical education Special educational needs

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	8
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	11
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	15
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS	17
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	31

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Our Lady Star of the Sea Catholic Primary School is a **very effective** school and is well on the way to excellence. Standards are well above average and pupils achieve very successfully. The school is led very well by the headteacher who has formed a very strong team with the deputy headteacher and other staff. Together they work very hard to provide a very good quality of education for the pupils. Teaching and learning are of very good quality and pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal qualities are particular strengths. The school gives **very good** value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards are well above average in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. They are above average in information and communication technology (ICT), design and technology, history and physical education.
- Achievement is very good overall
- The quality of teaching and learning is very good. There are particular strengths in teaching and learning in the reception, Key Stage 1 and Year 6 classes.
- The leadership of the headteacher is very good. She has a very clear vision for the future of the school and her expectations are high.
- Pupils are very keen to come to school; they behave very well and become children who are a pleasure to know. Relationships are excellent.
- There is a rich and varied curriculum that is very well enhanced by a very wide range of additional activities.
- Children get off to a very effective start in the Foundation Stage because the quality of provision is very good.
- Monitoring of achievement and the quality of learning is developing well, but requires enhancement in order to maintain a watchful eye over the consistency of provision through the school.

The school has made **good** improvement since 1999. It has sustained the many strengths identified then. Since the headteacher joined the school in 2003 she has introduced a number of significant changes, notably to school management, the curriculum and teaching and learning. These have all had a good impact on rates of achievement. Standards have been raised very successfully to a well above average level, and there is absolutely no complacency in school.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

In 2004 pupils in Year 6 attained well above average standards in the English, mathematics and science national tests. The following table shows the results over recent years in Year 6.

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

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

The rate of improvements to standards in Year 6 has been better than in most schools. This year, standards are well above average in English, mathematics and science and above average in ICT, design and technology, history and physical education. Standards are well on track to be above

average at the end of Year 2 and also by the end of reception. Pupils achieve **very well** in school with particular spurts in reception, Key Stage 1 and Year 6 classes.

Attendance levels are well above average and pupils arrive punctually for school. Pupils behave very well, they show very good attitudes to their work and relationships are excellent. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is **very good** overall. The school is very successful in its work to make its pupils friendly, polite and considerate children.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is **very good**. The quality of teaching and learning is **very good**. Most teaching is of at least good quality and much is better than this. Teaching and learning are particularly effective in reception, Key Stage 1 and Year 6 classes. Teachers have very good expectations on the whole, lesson planning is a strength and teaching methods are very effective in encouraging pupils to work hard and hold their concentration over long periods. Pupils work very productively and they build skills, knowledge and understanding at very good rates.

There is a comprehensive system of assessment for English and mathematics, which is being extended successfully to other subjects. The school has a very well thought out plan for the development of a target setting, sharing and tracking system to ensure all pupils achieve their best. This is very well embedded in Year 6, but has to be consolidated elsewhere in school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall quality of leadership, management and governance is **very good**. Since taking up the post early in 2003, the headteacher has made a number of significant changes to policy and practice in school in order to raise standards and improve the quality of provision, all with conspicuous success. The headteacher has a very clear picture of what she wants the school and its pupils to achieve. She leads the school very effectively and is joined in this work by a team of committed, hard working and very well focused staff, including the deputy headteacher, who is a very good leader. Governors fully support the school, they are very well involved in its work, and are very aware of its performance. Governors ask demanding questions to ensure the school is as successful as possible, and they ensure it meets fully the requirement to provide best value.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents expressed very few concerns to inspectors. They hold very positive views of the school and are very pleased they chose it for their children. The pupils also hold very positive views and they say they enjoy being in school. The school takes parents' and pupils' views fully into account when planning changes or innovations.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important thing the school should do to improve is:

- Maintain a vigilant watch over standards, achievement and the quality of education to ensure excellence of provision is attained in the near future.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Standards are **well above average** and achievement is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well in school with particular spurts in reception, Key Stage 1 and Year 6 classes.
- The rate of improvements to standards in Year 6 has been better than in most schools.
- This year, standards in Year 6 are well above average in English, mathematics and science and above average in information and communication technology (ICT), design and technology, history and physical education.
- Standards are well on track to be above average in Year 2.
- Children in reception are on target to reach above average level of skills and knowledge by the time they join Year 1.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well because the provision for them is very well geared to their needs.

Commentary

1. The following table summarises the Year 2 national test results in 2003 and 2004. Last year, whilst standards in reading and mathematics were well above average, they were not as high, being average, in writing. Standards in the Year 2 science teacher assessments were high. Over recent years, the school has improved its results in the Year 2 national tests at a similar rate to most other primary schools.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	17.6 (16.9)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	15.2 (14.3)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	17.7 (17.6)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 41 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. In 2004, pupils in Year 6 attained well above average standards in English, mathematics and science. These results marked an above average rate of improvement to standards since the school was previously inspected in 1999. The following table indicates the very favourable comparison that can be made between standards in school and those found across the country.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	29.2 (31.3)	26.9 (26.8)
Mathematics	29.9 (29.6)	27.0 (26.8)
Science	30.4 (31.2)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 39 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3. In general, pupils achieve very well in school. There are particular bursts of achievement in reception, Key Stage 1 and Year 6 classes. The children in reception have work that is very well matched to their needs and which allows them opportunities to make choices and to participate in a very good blend of adult-directed and independent tasks. Adult intervention is skilful in encouraging the children to think carefully about their experiences and to talk confidently too. The children in reception add considerably to their broadly average starting level of skills and knowledge during their year in the class. Their achievement is very good and by the time they join Year 1 all have met, and most have exceeded, their early learning goals.
4. Pupils in the Key Stage 1 classes also achieve very well. This rate of skills and knowledge building is due to the very effective provision in Key Stage 1. Teaching, learning and the curriculum are all of very good quality and the consistency of provision across the two year groups goes a long way to ensure that achievement is very marked and that standards are above average overall at the end of Year 2.
5. There is not the same total consistency of achievement in the Key Stage 2 years. This is, in part, due to staff changes and relatively less experience of teaching the age group amongst the staff. However, achievement is nowhere less than good overall and in Year 6 there is an upward surge in achievement that ensures that the standards reached at the end of that year are well above average overall. The current pupils in Year 6 are well on track to reach well above average standards in English, mathematics and science and above average standards in ICT, design and technology, history and physical education by the time they leave for secondary school. School managers accept the need for great watchfulness to ensure the quality of provision, level of expectation and rate of achievement is maximised in all classes through the Key Stage 2 years.
6. It is very evident that pupils from different backgrounds generally achieve equally successfully. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is very good. The provision for them is very carefully planned with a detailed breakdown of the small steps to be taken in order to achieve their targets. Teachers and teaching assistants provide very good support to enable pupils with special educational needs to make sure and steady progress. There is very good challenge for higher attaining pupils and they achieve very well. Middle attaining pupils are also provided for very effectively and their achievement is also very good. Lesson planning is very successful in identifying work that is matched thoroughly to the needs of these different attainment groups and all are provided with demanding and enjoyable tasks.
7. The very few pupils from ethnic minority groups achieve very well. They are represented in all attainment groups and they are very well integrated into the learning. Their original heritage is celebrated in school and this enables them to build great self-esteem, which serves them very well in their achievement.
8. Recent results in the national tests have seen girls do better than boys in some subjects and boys to do better than the girls in others. Sometimes these trends have been opposite those found nationally. However, there is no clear overall trend in the achievement of boys and girls and inspectors judge them to make similar overall progress. Boys and girls were observed during the inspection to work as productively as each other in most lessons. The scrutiny of past work also showed this overall trend. In a very few cases, one or two boys were less willing learners, especially in the afternoons. However, staff hold high expectations of boys' (and girls') response and generally work successfully to maintain the concentration and achievement rate of both genders.
9. There are a very small number of pupils who speak English as an additional language. Most of these pupils speak other European languages. During their time in school they have become fluent speakers of English and their reading and writing skills match the very good achievement they are making in the development of speaking and listening skills. This is due to the great care with which all staff encourage, reinforce and extend these pupils' learning of English.

10. All the evidence suggests that the school has very bright prospects of maintaining the overall upward swing in standards and increase in achievement seen in recent years.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are **very good**. Relationships are **excellent**. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' rates of attendance are high.
- Relationships between all members of the school community are excellent.
- Pupils are extremely willing to take responsibility and work independently.
- The school provides very well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Commentary

11. Pupils' very good attitudes to learning have been maintained since the last inspection. They are proud of the school and very much enjoy being part of the school community. They work with confidence and know they need to do their best in order to do well. Pupils get on excellently with adults working in the school and with each other. They think they are treated fairly. Together with their very good behaviour, the very positive attitude of pupils to lessons and other school activities contributes well to their achievement. Parents are supportive of the school behaviour policy and have no concerns regarding bullying or harassment. They are confident that staff would deal with any reported incidents effectively. There was one very justified fixed-term exclusion in the last reporting year.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	244	1	0

12. The very good levels of personal development displayed by most pupils are due in good part to the provision made by the school. Spiritual awareness is fostered very well. Teachers value pupils' ideas, and occasions for pupils to develop their imagination and self-awareness are used at every opportunity, as seen in the Year 6 led school assembly with a very expressive dance routine. The provision for pupils' moral and social development is very strong. Pupils discuss and agree class rules and respond very well to the awarding of house points. Staff provide very good role models in their dealings with pupils and each other, providing opportunities for matters of behaviour and relationships to be discussed and developed carefully. Moral issues such as the destruction of the rain forest form part of the curriculum, and are enthusiastically discussed. Pupils very much enjoy taking responsibility as helpers and apply enthusiastically for the positions advertised, such as work with children in the privately provided nursery on site. Pupils take these responsibilities very seriously and carry them out to the best of their ability. Very good arrangements to nurture cultural development, such as theatre workshops and museum visits, support pupils' personal growth well. Pupils' knowledge and appreciation of other cultures is taken very seriously; for example, pupils have studied Kenya and a visitor has shown African dance, music and dress.
13. Attendance is well above the national average and staff monitor attendance very carefully. Teachers call the registers at the beginning of every session. Absence is consistently followed

up and written reasons are always sought. The home school agreement supports the school policies on attendance, behaviour and homework well.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	4.0	School data:	0.0
National data:	5.4	National data:	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is **very good**. Separately, teaching, learning, the curriculum, care, welfare and guidance, and the partnership with parents, other schools and the community are all **very good**. Assessment, resources and the accommodation are all of **good** quality.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are of **very good** quality. Assessment is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very effective and the quality of pupils' learning is very good.
- Most teaching is of at least good quality and much is better than this.
- Pupils work very productively and they build skills, knowledge and understanding at very good rates.
- There is a comprehensive system of assessment for English and mathematics and the school has begun to implement an effective target setting, sharing and tracking system.

Commentary

14. In all, the quality of teaching is very good and this enables the pupils to achieve at very good rates. During the inspection all teaching and learning observed was of at least satisfactory quality and over three-quarters was of good or better quality. The scrutiny of pupils' past work confirms this pattern of teaching and learning. There is no evidence at all of unsatisfactory teaching. The overall quality is summarised in the following table.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 47 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2 (4%)	20 (43%)	14 (30%)	11 (23%)	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. There was one additional lesson observed, but this was not judged because the visit was too short for a reliable assessment to be made of its effectiveness. However, what was observed had no shortcomings.

15. Pupils work very productively and they build skills, knowledge and understanding at very good rates. Lessons are enjoyable and very well motivating for the pupils and they develop very good skills of working independently, responsibly and collaboratively. There is as much focus on learning new skills as there is on learning new knowledge. Teachers skilfully consolidate past learning and provide the necessary challenge to ensure that there is suitable extension of knowledge, skills and understanding. Pupils are very attentive, they are eager to answer

questions and to take part in the activities and they maintain very good concentration over long periods. The very good quality of learning contributes considerably to the very good achievement of pupils.

16. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and expertise. Lesson planning is very thorough and very effective encouragement is given to pupils to work hard. Teachers use stimulating methods, as seen in an excellent reception lesson focused on physical development. In this session the children worked energetically to develop some high quality movements in their *friendship dance* between a penguin and a snowman. The teacher maintained a very brisk pace to the work and the work to develop skills was particularly successful. When the children left the hall for their classroom they showed that they had thoroughly enjoyed their workout and were eager for more. They had achieved at an outstanding rate.
17. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is consistently of very good quality. This ensures that learning is very successful and, in turn, that achievement is also very good. Teamwork in the Foundation Stage is a strength; the nursery nurse is skilled in her work to provide very good support for all of the children, and she works very effectively together with the teachers to intervene, reinforce, encourage, challenge and extend the children as they work. In this way, the children develop very good skills of independent working and they grow considerably in confidence.
18. Teaching quality for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Teachers and the assistants assigned to support pupils with statements work very hard to meet their needs. Planning is comprehensive and thorough, and the work set is very well matched to individual needs. Assessment of how well these pupils learn is very well focused on the necessary small steps in learning for each pupil. Teachers are particularly effective in recording the progress that pupils with special needs make week by week. This helps greatly in adapting work to help the pupils achieve very successfully. The provision for these pupils is organised very sensitively so that most pupils are unaware of which of their friends receive this extra attention.
19. Assessment is of good overall quality and is particularly well developed in English and mathematics. The school has developed a thorough programme of assessment for other subjects, but this has not yet fully bedded-in. There remain some inconsistencies in the use, sharing and tracking of targets, the use of informative comments when marking pupils' work and opportunities for pupils to self-assess their achievement in lessons. Some good, and very good, practice in these aspects of assessment was observed during the inspection, but school managers know that more consistency and rigour will strengthen the already good quality of assessment. There are very good prospects for the successful realisation of these priorities for improvement.

The curriculum

The curriculum is **very good**. The accommodation, staffing and learning resources are **good** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is rich and relevant and provides enjoyment and great motivation for the pupils.
- Much hard work has gone into trying new ideas and improving the curriculum.
- The curriculum is enriched very well.
- Personal, social and health education is very good.
- The use of computers is a very strong feature of the curriculum.
- The library needs more investment.

Commentary

20. A rich and varied, high quality curriculum meets statutory requirements and contributes very significantly to pupils' achievements. The very good use of computers and other forms of technology is a particularly strong feature of the learning opportunities the school provides. Teachers exploit the electronic screens linked to computers, known as interactive whiteboards, which are found in every classroom, very well to teach a wide range of subjects.
21. The curriculum has developed greatly since the present headteacher took up her post. A clear focus on developing skills and adapting lessons to suit the learning styles of pupils enhances learning very well. The planning of programmes of work and lessons has improved considerably. The amount of time given to different activities has been considered carefully and action taken to ensure that pupils get enough exercise each week and have plenty of opportunity to develop computer skills. The school works very hard to improve the curriculum and tries out new ideas to achieve this goal, such as changing the times at which subjects are taught. The current focus on boosting the provision for the arts is producing impressive results, including a big increase in the number of pupils learning to play musical instruments.
22. The very good arrangements for personal, social and health education have a significant effect on pupils' overall development. Sex and relationships education and the raising of pupils' awareness of the dangers of drugs abuse are integrated very well into the teaching of subjects such as science. As a result, pupils develop life skills, such as recognising what constitutes a healthy diet, very effectively.
23. The curriculum gives all pupils equal opportunities to succeed. The school continues to cater very well for pupils with special educational needs, helping them to make very good progress. The plans drawn up to help each of these pupils move forward are of high quality and the weekly recording of pupils' achievement of the objectives is especially effective.
24. A very good range of visits and visitors enriches the curriculum very well. A homework club, started at the suggestion of one of the pupils, provides good opportunities for additional study. Participation in sports, arts and other clubs outside lesson time is high.
25. The accommodation is generally of good quality, with several valuable rooms available for group work. However, in one or two instances, pupils and staff have to pass through one classroom to reach another. The quality and quantity of learning resources is satisfactory overall, but further investment is needed to improve the library.

Care, guidance and support

The support, guidance and advice provided for pupils are **very good**. The involvement of pupils through seeking and valuing their views is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers know their pupils very well and are very supportive and caring of them.
- Parents are happy with the schools induction programme.
- Pupils' views are regularly sought through class and school council meetings.

Commentary

26. The school has maintained the very good care and support it provides for pupils since the time of the previous inspection. Teachers know their pupils very well and value their contribution in lessons. Their achievements are consistently celebrated. Staff monitor the personal development of pupils carefully, through circle time, class discussion and the views expressed at class and school council meetings.
27. Child protection procedures are fully in place and well understood by staff, although the training undertaken by the member of staff with the responsibility for child protection is in need of

updating. The school has good health and safety procedures and all necessary equipment checks are up to date. Risk assessments are regularly undertaken. First aid procedures are very good and there is good provision for pupils who are unwell. The school has very good links with the child support agencies including the school nurse. Parents, in reply to the questionnaire, say they are happy with the schools induction arrangements for those children entering the reception class. These allow the children to settle quickly and feel secure in their new surroundings. Pupils have trusting relationships with staff and are willing to talk to them about any concerns they may have.

28. Detailed records help teachers and managers to monitor the academic progress and personal development of pupils with special educational needs very effectively. Liaison with external agencies, such as the educational psychology service, is very effective. The school recognises that the pupils would benefit from being more involved in setting targets for them to achieve and in evaluating the progress they make towards reaching such goals.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The partnership with parents is **very good**. Parents are very supportive of the school. Links with the community and other schools are **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school successfully involves parents in its work.
- Teachers are willing to talk to parents at any reasonable time.
- Parents are very supportive of the school.
- The school has developed very good links with partner institutions.

Commentary

29. As found at the previous inspection, most parents think very highly of the school and feel comfortable about approaching the staff with any questions or concerns. The information provided for parents in weekly newsletters, termly curriculum letters, on the school web site and at parent teacher consultation meetings is very good and valued by parents. Pupils' annual progress reports are detailed and contain areas for development. Most parents and pupils are satisfied with the amount of homework given. The prospectus is attractively presented and provides a useful practical guide to the school. A range of workshops for parents have been held to discuss mathematics, the teaching of reading and the curriculum taught in school. Parents say that these have been of very good quality and they value them highly. Staff appreciate the regular, reliable help given by parents both in school and on visits. The *Friends Association* is very supportive of the school. Their fundraising such as the *Family Fun Day* provides valuable resources to enrich pupils' learning.
30. The relationship with parents of pupils with special educational needs is very good. The parents are very supportive of their children and the school. All parents attend the annual reviews of the progress pupils have made.
31. The school has a very good partnership with the local community through the parish church and its parishioners. Teachers and pupils benefit from strong links with other schools, including St. Bede's High School, with visits for performances and other special events. There are very close links with the on site independent nursery with, for example, a joint nativity play this Christmas. Students are made welcome, both those on work experience and on college placements.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **very good** overall. The leadership and management provided by the headteacher is **very good**. Leadership of other key staff is **very effective** and governance is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The leadership of the headteacher is very good and has been highly effective in securing improvements.
- Governors support and challenge the school very well.
- The leadership team has a strong drive to improvement and takes effective action.
- Strategic planning, based on the monitoring of performance and evaluation, is very good.
- Monitoring and evaluation, and target setting and tracking procedures require enhancement.

Commentary

32. The headteacher, who has been in post since January 2003, has an inspirational vision for the future direction of the school. Her vision builds successfully on the strong aims, mission statement and values of the school and the maintenance of high standards. She has succeeded in establishing a very strong staff team who are highly committed to an approach that involves the teaching of a broad curriculum that enables pupils to leave the school as well rounded individuals. The school is not complacent about its work and constantly challenges itself to do better. Very careful monitoring is carried out to ensure that all pupils are achieving their full potential. The school aims for the highest possible results and carries out regular and extensive self-evaluation and analysis of test results to identify areas for improvement. For instance, a close scrutiny of pupils' performance in writing tests has identified areas to improve which have been successfully implemented thereby raising pupils' attainment and achievement.
33. The headteacher's constant determination and quest for improvement is benefiting the leadership capacity of the whole leadership team through joint evaluation of performance, team discussion and by taking effective action. The areas of focus have been to improve writing throughout the school and to continue to monitor teaching and learning in all subjects, and to improve the role of all staff as leaders. In all aspects, there is evidence of significant improvement and the headteacher is very aware of the need to maintain vigilance in ensuring high standards in aspects of the school's work. The process of target setting, sharing and tracking is being introduced successfully. There is some excellent practice in Year 6, but it is not consistent through the school and in all the appropriate subjects. However, strategic planning is very good. The school development plan identifies the key priorities for improvement and provides exceptionally clear guidance on strategies to achieve them.
34. The response from governors, parents, staff and pupils shows that the headteacher and other leaders provide very good role models for staff and pupils. The strong commitment to providing well for all pupils, regardless of their sex, race or disability, contributes to the very warm and caring ethos of the school. The leadership and management of the curriculum by subject leaders, and of the provision for pupils with special educational needs, are very good. The co-ordinator for special educational needs gives strong support to teaching staff in making classroom provision for pupils, and maintains detailed records that help in analysing achievement. There are very good induction procedures for new teachers, who quickly feel part of the team.
35. The school monitors the pupils' performance in English, mathematics and science very well. Lesson observation by senior leaders has led to the identification, by the whole staff, of strengths and weaknesses and to subsequent improvements in action planned. This has led to a very consistent approach to lesson planning and to a very good focus on the learning intended. There is now a need to enhance the monitoring and evaluation of provision and standards in other subjects across the school. Senior managers acknowledge that this priority is timely and appropriate, and have definite plans for the extension of monitoring and evaluation in this way.

36. The governing body is very committed and provides very good support to the school. Action has been taken on any minor issues identified in the previous inspection and improvement on these has been good. Governors fulfil their statutory functions well. As link governors, they visit the school regularly and receive reports on progress. They contribute well to strategic planning and to setting overall targets. Through the planning process, they challenge the school to improve its performance and are very aware of its strengths and weaknesses. Financial management is very good and adheres well to the principles of obtaining best value for money in order to achieve educational priorities. The school provides very good value for money.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	630 571	Balance from previous year	92 641
Total expenditure	608 443	Balance carried forward to the next year	114 769
Expenditure per pupil	2 414		

37. The ultimate balance carried forward after the end of the financial year was earmarked for specific purposes in relation to improvements to the accommodation and for contingencies. The long-term financial plan shows how this balance will again reduce in the next two years leaving a very small positive balance, within the local education authority's recommended guidelines.

Most significant aids or barriers to raising achievement

38. The limitations of the building make raising pupils' achievement more difficult. The school is helped by its very good leadership, its hard working and dedicated team of staff, the strong school ethos and the absolute commitment to value all members of the community.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision in the Foundation Stage is **very good**. Children get off to a very good start and they achieve highly, which is one of the school's strengths.

39. Children join the reception class at the beginning of the year they are five. Many, but not all of them, have attended some form of pre-school provision. When they start school their skills and understanding are broadly average, with a small number of children achieving just higher than average in early reading and number skills. Teaching is consistently very good, which is the main reason that children's' achievement is also very good. Teamwork is strong, and the team leader provides high quality leadership. The nursery nurse provides very good support that enables all the children to make speedy progress in all areas of learning. Early assessment identifies where the children need extra support, which is provided straight away so that no time is wasted. Children who are dual language learners also have very good support, which develops their spoken English skills very well indeed. The curriculum is exciting for all the children. Indoor and outdoor areas are interesting and challenging, creating a positive learning environment that promotes all areas of learning very well.
40. After a few weeks in school a very small group of children transfer into a mixed reception and Year 1 class because there are too many children for one class. The system works very well and the provision for the reception children is of the same high quality as that in the pure reception class.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve very well because of very good teaching and the high expectations of the staff.
- Relationships are very good, as is behaviour.
- There are no missed opportunities to develop children's independence, confidence and self-esteem.

Commentary

41. This aspect underpins everything that happens in the Foundation Stage. Teaching is very good and children achieve highly. Most of them are on course to well exceed their targets¹ by the end of the reception year. The strong emphasis on developing the whole child means that every child has planned opportunities to work alone or in small groups. The very good balance between self-chosen activities and those directed by the teacher enables every pupil to have a good range of different experiences that develop their confidence well. Secure routines enable children to feel secure, giving them confidence to 'have a go' at new situations and experiences. Children respond well. They are keen and interested and they want to learn. Behaviour is very good because the tasks are interesting and exciting. Adults use praise very well and the children are very clear about what is expected of them as they rise eagerly to the challenges that are set. Children are independent in their dressing and personal hygiene. Their progress in this area of learning is tracked very well and this includes those children with special educational needs and those that are dual language learners.

¹ These are known as The Early Learning Goals.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's skills are developed very well across the whole of the Foundation Stage curriculum. There are no missed opportunities to develop children's language skills.
- Achievement is very good and most children will exceed their targets by the end of reception.
- Books and reading are enjoyed and the children take great care with the presentation of their work.

Commentary

42. Most children are on course to exceed their targets by the end of the reception year and a minority could well attain higher than this. This is the result of very good teaching and rigorous assessment that speedily identifies which children need further challenge and which children have gaps in their learning. Very effective teamwork enables higher, average and lower attaining children to achieve very well. The strong focus on developing spoken language and vocabulary through probing questions and the expectation that children respond in sentences pays dividends. Children listen carefully and they are confident at speaking to the whole class, as they do in role-play or when talking about their book or story. Books are enjoyed and the children are adept at sequencing a range of activities linked their class and individual reading books. Most children are confident to 'have a go' when they arrive at an unknown word. Children hold their pencil correctly when writing and many, but not all, of them can write their first name. Very good progress has been made in writing over the course of the term.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well because their mathematical skills are developed across all areas of learning both in and out of the classroom.
- Mathematical language is developed well through a range of practical activities.

Commentary

43. Children are on course to exceed their targets by their end of the reception year. The strong focus on practical activities encourages children's understanding of number/relationships right from the start of their time in school. Most children are very confident when identifying *one more than* or *one less than* up to 10, but only the higher attainers are able to work this out when using coins. Daily mathematical activities extend children's understanding successfully. Counting and recognising numbers, alongside the development of mental strategies, are practised daily. Children use these skills confidently in other areas, for example in the role-play area, when playing outdoors or when counting how many children are in the sand or water. Rhymes and songs facilitate children's understanding well. Teaching is good as is the children's achievement. Children learn from working practically and this gives them confidence to identify patterns in number and to manipulate numbers.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is rich, imaginative and exciting.
- Teaching is very good, as is children's achievement.

Commentary

44. Staff provide a wide range of interesting experiences that stimulate children's curiosity and enhance their understanding. Computers are used successfully as children guide the mouse and interact with their programs. Many children are familiar with the interactive whiteboard, using it with confidence either as individuals or when working with a partner. Children use their senses of smell, touch, hearing and sight effectively as they investigate the world around them, understanding differences in weather patterns according to the season of the year. There are no missed opportunities to develop children's natural curiosity on a day-by-day basis and most children are on course to exceed their targets by the end of the reception year. Teaching is very good, enabling the children to achieve highly and to exceed their targets by the end of the school year.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is very good and many children will exceed their targets by the end of reception.
- The very good range of activities promotes children's physical development very well.
- Creative dance has a high profile and children achieve highly because of very good teaching.
- Learning outside the classroom is planned very well.

Commentary

45. Physical activities are promoted very well, both indoors and outdoors and many children are on course to exceed their targets by the end of the year. Very good planning ensures that children experience a stimulating range of physical activities. These challenge and extend children's movements very well, helping them to develop an awareness of the potential of their bodies. Standards are high and children achieve very well. This was especially apparent in dance where children's achievement was very good in both classes with reception-aged children. They developed a *friendship dance* between a penguin and a snowman contrasting different movements and interpreting different sounds and rhythms very well. Out of doors, children experiment effectively with different wheeled vehicles. They are fully aware of safety issues having a good awareness of space, themselves and others.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good because of effective teaching and learning.
- The imaginative play area is resourced and used very well to encourage children's creative response.

Commentary

46. This area of learning is planned very well. Because of the proximity of Christmas, few lessons were observed but teachers' plans show that the children have access to a very good range of materials, with many opportunities to be creative, to make models, draw and paint. The rehearsal for the Christmas play was executed with confidence and aplomb. Children were very happy to participate. The quality of singing was very good and these young children had clear diction and very good pitch, holding the beat very well. Actions were performed with great sensitivity. All children were included, including those with special educational needs and those who are dual language learners. Teaching is very good, as is children's achievement. Most of them are on course to exceed their targets by the end of the year.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in English are well above average by the end of Year 6 and pupils achieve very well.
- Teaching and learning are very good overall.
- English is very well led and managed.
- Key Stage 1 pupils use phonic skills well to work out new words when reading.
- There are limited opportunities for pupils to use their literacy skills in some other subjects.
- Some pupils' handwriting and the way they present their work is untidy.

Commentary

47. The standards seen during the inspection were above average overall by the end of Year 2 and well above average by the end of Year 6. In the 2004 national tests for pupils aged seven, standards were well above average in reading and average in writing. The trend over the last three years has been well above the national trend in reading and average in writing, indicating good achievement in reading from an average starting point in reception. Year 6 pupils' results indicate very good achievement in English in 2004. Pupils' results were well above the national average with almost half of the pupils attaining the higher level 5. The trend in improvement to standards in Year 6 is above the national trend.
48. Achievement in speaking and listening is good overall for pupils by the ages of seven and very good by the age of eleven and the majority of pupils reach standards which are above the expected levels by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. All pupils listen carefully when others are speaking. Higher-attaining Key Stage 2 pupils discuss their learning maturely and sensibly with a very good awareness of speaking and listening conventions. Teachers and teaching assistants work hard to ensure that pupils understand specific words in texts and encourage pupils to respond to questions in full sentences. All teachers encourage pupils to discuss their learning together with a *talk partner*, which promotes very good speaking and listening skills. Older pupils confidently present their views and opinions in assemblies and class councils. Year 6 pupils have to make a presentation to other pupils in their houses justifying why they should be elected to the post of house captain.
49. Pupils' achievement is very good in reading. Higher-attaining pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 reach well above average standards in reading and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, enjoy books and listening to stories. Pupils are very enthusiastic about books and older pupils know how to skim and scan texts for information. Some pupils with special educational needs read competently, but their comprehension skills are weaker and they find it hard to use inference and deduction to see beyond the facts in their stories. Year 2 pupils enjoy reading very much and are skilled at using letter sounds to deduce new vocabulary. The school has introduced a daily 'phonics' session in Key Stage 1, which is having a very positive impact on raising pupils' attainment and achievement even further.
50. Key Stage 1 pupils' attainment and achievement in writing have improved considerably and standards are currently above average. Standards are well above average at the end of Year 6. Very good subject leadership, renewed enthusiasm amongst staff and increased expertise have improved writing standards. Teachers' planning is very good and interesting and exciting writing tasks are skilfully provided which match pupils' varying levels of ability. Key Stage 2 pupils write in an impressive variety of different ways and produce impressive poetry and interesting narratives. For instance in an outstanding winter personification poem a higher attaining pupil writes this enticing opening line: *Autumn's reign over the land has ended*. Older pupils' writing is imaginative, interesting and thought provoking, although on occasions some pupils' untidy handwriting and presentation spoils an otherwise good piece of writing.

51. Teaching and learning was good overall in the lessons seen. Teaching assistants provide very good support in literacy lessons, particularly for pupils with special educational needs, as they ensure that pupils understand the task and explain any unfamiliar vocabulary, rephrasing information when necessary. Teachers' planning is very detailed and clear. Teachers share simplified learning objectives with the pupils so that they know exactly what they are going to learn. Expectations for work and behaviour are very high and teachers provide interesting and enticing activities which ensure pupils are motivated and enthusiastic and work very hard. Teachers are extremely skilful at using ICT in literacy lessons. For instance, Year 2 pupils achieve very well when learning about writing information texts because of the teacher's highly effective use of the interactive whiteboard, which inspires and fascinates the pupils. Teachers are also highly adept at providing pupils with very useful checklists for ensuring pupils have included the correct features when writing different types of texts. The majority are very good role models with their own neat and well-formed handwriting and their skilful story telling techniques.
52. The subject leaders provide very good leadership and management. They have monitored literacy lessons and, together with the senior management team, have studied test results to identify areas for improvement. They have achieved a good deal and have correctly identified the next steps to improve English even further. The school has made good improvement since the last inspection, particularly in terms of tracking pupils' progress and in improving and maintaining above average standards in reading and writing at the end of Year 2 and well above average standards at the end of Year 6.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

53. The use of language and literacy across the curriculum is satisfactory throughout the school. Pupils are encouraged to record their work in their own words in many subjects and very few worksheets are used. However, the skills taught in literacy lessons are not always used well in some other subjects. For instance writing could be developed more in geography. All pupils use speaking and listening skills well in class discussions and with their *talk partners*, knowing and adhering to conventions of speaking, such as turn taking and asking relevant questions. This was very evident in a Year 6 class council session where pupils maturely and sensibly discussed aspects of school life.

FRENCH

54. A specialist teacher teaches French to pupils in Years 3 and 4. Each year group has a weekly 30-minute lesson. French is also taught as an extra-curricular activity to pupils in Years 5 and 6 who can attend an after school club to reinforce their earlier learning and to develop new skills in spoken French. No lessons were observed because none were taught during the inspection period. Pupils' work demonstrates that pupils have a good understanding of speech patterns and common vocabulary. The subject enhances the curriculum on offer, providing a secure base for pupils' later learning when they transfer to the secondary school.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above average mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Achievement is very good overall.
- The quality of teaching and learning is very good. There are particular strengths in teaching and learning in Key Stage 1 and Year 6 classes.
- Leadership and management of mathematics are very good. This has led to good improvement to provision and standards.
- Assessment, and the monitoring of achievement and the quality of learning are developing well, but require some enhancement.

Commentary

55. Provision in mathematics has been improved well since the inspection in 1999, and standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are currently well above average. In the Year 2 and 6 national tests last year standards in mathematics were also well above average. Overall, pupils achieve very well in the subject in all year groups because the work is very carefully planned and matched to individual and group needs.
56. Another significant factor in the very good rate of achievement is the very good quality of teaching and learning. Teaching of this quality was observed throughout the school and was also evident from the scrutiny of pupils' past work. In particular, teaching and learning in the Key Stage 1 and Year 6 classes, is very effective in assisting pupils to consolidate and extend their skills, knowledge and understanding. Very good teaching was observed in each of the Year 6 classes as pupils learned how to plot co-ordinates in four quadrants. Most pupils in these lessons were able to give precise addresses for particular locations, using the standard bracket and comma format. Achievement was very good in both classes and standards were very clearly at the higher level 5.
57. There is a very good curriculum for mathematics that balances most successfully the emphasis on basic numeracy skills and the need for pupils to apply their mathematics to meaningful problem solving activities and some quite complex investigations into the power of mathematics. The very effective quality of provision is the product of very good leadership and management. The subject leader is very hard working and is very knowledgeable and influential in her work to ensure that all pupils receive a very closely tailored programme of work that ensures that all, regardless of gender, ethnicity or academic prowess have equal opportunities to do well.
58. The subject leader recognises that assessment, including target setting and tracking, requires some additional refinement. She is working currently to ensure that the system is applied consistently through the school. Similarly, as a current priority she is working to enhance the quality of monitoring and evaluation of provision, standards and achievement. There is every prospect that these initiatives will be brought to a very successful conclusion, such is the track record of effective improvement in mathematics.

Mathematics across the curriculum

59. Very good use of mathematics is made in other subjects. In addition, teachers use other times of the day, such as registration and break to polish pupils' mathematical skills and knowledge. Some very good examples of the improvement of mathematical skills are to be found in science, design and technology, geography and history. For example, in geography, Year 2 pupils have conducted a through survey of traffic in St Annes Square; they have charted and graphed this information and shared it with local councillors.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above average, as they were at the time of the last inspection.
- Pupils achieve very well.
- Teaching is very good overall and learning is helped greatly by pupils' very good attitudes.
- The science curriculum contributes very effectively to health education and work in other subjects.
- Leadership and management are good.

Commentary

60. Inspection evidence confirms the results of the national tests for 2004, which show that at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6, standards are well above average. The scrutiny of pupils' work shows that the teachers set challenging tasks and this leads to pupils achieving very effectively. Generally, pupils are already working comfortably at the level children across the country are expected to reach at the end of the year. Higher attaining pupils are usually set appropriately demanding tasks enabling them to fulfil their potential. Boys and girls achieve equally well. Pupils with special educational needs and those who do not speak English at home achieve very well.
61. Analysis of pupils' work shows that overall, very good teaching is the key factor in pupils' high levels of achievement as it was at the time of the last inspection. The observation of lessons shows that teaching is most effective in Years 1, 2 and 6. Pupils' eagerness to learn, their hard work and very good levels of concentration help greatly to improve their learning.
62. There are some very good examples of teachers posing questions when marking pupils' work, which cause them to think. For example, in a Year 6 book the teacher had written, *Why do you think the heart rate had increased?* In the best practice, a dialogue builds up between teacher and pupils, resulting in the child responding very well to the written comments, finishing work when asked and answering the questions put.
63. The work in science makes a very good contribution to pupils' health education, for example, through the study of teeth and healthy foods. Links with other subjects are productive, leading to the development of skills in drawing line graphs and in searching the Internet.
64. The subject is led and managed well by an enthusiastic leader. Her work to increase the extent to which pupils learn through investigation has significantly enhanced to quality of their science education. Changes to allow pupils in mixed age group classes to be taught science with children of their own age are helping to ensure that learning takes place progressively. Plans are in place to give the leader responsibility for analysing the strengths and weaknesses of pupils' attainment and so gain a better overview of standards across the school.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average and pupils achieve well as they pass through the school.
- ICT is used very well in other subjects.
- The subject is led and managed very well.
- Resources for learning are very good.

Commentary

65. Standards are above average in Years 2 and 6. At the time of the last inspection standards were judged to be well above average. However, changes made nationally mean that a great deal more is now expected of pupils of all ages in this subject.
66. Pupils in Year 2 show particular strengths in using graphics programs and entering data. Teachers work very effectively to help pupils to become independent, so that in Year 6 they confidently download images from digital cameras and create presentations on the computer that combine text, graphics, animation and sound. They do not currently email or use external sensors, such as temperature probes linked to the computer, but plans are in place to provide these experiences.
67. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers conduct lessons at a brisk pace and make good demands on pupils. This results in pupils engaging very well with what is taught and working hard to succeed. Pupils have an excellent understanding of how well they are learning because there are given responsibility for recording the progress they make, overseen by the teachers.
68. The great enthusiasm of staff to exploit computers to promote pupils' learning has a very positive impact on standards. This stems from the very good work of the subject leader. The high quality of her leadership and management provides an excellent model for other subject leaders. Her monitoring of the standards that pupils attain, teachers' planning and the quality of teaching and learning have a very positive effect on pupils' achievements.
69. The range and quality of hardware and software have improved significantly since the last inspection. There is one computer for every five pupils in the school. This is a very good ratio and helps to provide many opportunities for pupils to practise. The recent purchase of twelve battery powered laptop computers has allowed the more flexible use of resources.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

70. The school continues to use ICT very extensively for many teaching purposes. For example, pupils in Year 2 create Mendhi patterns as part of their work in religious education. Interactive whiteboards are used in a high proportion of lessons to teach a wide range of subjects. Teachers show very clearly in their planning how they will use computers.

HUMANITIES

The school is to have a separate inspection of **religious education** due to its Catholic background.

Geography

71. There was comparatively less evidence in total to help the evaluation of geography. For that reason, it is discussed in less detail here.

72. There is a very well planned curriculum for geography that is planned and taught successfully in tandem with history. The curriculum is well supplemented by a programme of visits and visitors that successfully broaden pupils' geographical knowledge. The work examined was generally of good quality and showed a logical and sensible progression in the development of knowledge. Marking is not always informative enough to help pupils improve their work. The development of writing skills is satisfactory in geography but a review of its scope and impact on achievement in English is necessary. Monitoring and evaluation of geography provision is developing as a thorough process and leadership and management of the subject are good.

History

Provision in history is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average in history and achievement is good.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good.
- History is well led and managed.
- There is a rich and varied curriculum that is very well enhanced by a very wide range of additional activities.
- Assessment and monitoring and evaluation require some enhancement.

Commentary

73. The programme for history is very well thought out and curriculum planning is a strength. There is also a very varied range of additional activities, such as visits and theme days that bring the subject alive for the pupils. They thoroughly enjoy history and many say that it is their favourite subject. Pupils' past work shows clearly how standards have been improved well in history since the previous inspection. Currently, standards are above average throughout the school and pupils achieve well. This is particularly marked in the Year 6 classes.
74. The quality of teaching and learning is also good. It is evident that Year 2 pupils develop a quizzical approach to history because of the engaging work that they are set and the open-ended nature of some of their investigations. This approach is maintained through the school, and by Year 6 pupils pose themselves some challenging questions, which they subsequently research thoroughly and answer with confidence. For example, during the current term, Year 6 pupils have examined the causes and consequences of high unemployment in the period between the two World Wars. The pupils made some telling deductions from their work, and their insights into social conditions of the time and the causes of the Second World War are very good.
75. History is a well led and managed subject. The leader is hard working, very involved in provision across the school and guides, leads and advises with a pleasant confidence that enhances her influence. At present, there are priorities to improve the quality of assessment and monitoring and evaluation. These are entirely suitable priorities. Marking is not always informative enough about how pupils can achieve, though there are some outstanding examples of informative marking in Year 6. The development of writing skills in history is not always as effective as it might be. There are very strong prospects that these aspects for improvement will be advanced successfully and that history will continue to have a good profile within the school curriculum.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design, music and physical education

76. As in the case of geography, it was only possible to make a light sample of work in art and design, music and physical education because there was not as much evidence available in the form of lessons and pupils' past work in these subjects.

Art and design

77. Although only one lesson was observed it is clear that standards in art and design are above those expected at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils' achievement is good throughout the school. Work in art and design is skilfully planned to introduce pupils to the required skills and understanding and to support work in other subjects such as history and science. Pupils in all year groups have produced a variety of work to a good standard in a wide range of media. In addition there has been an appropriate amount of work on art appreciation and in critical studies of a range of art and design. Pupils have a good knowledge of the work of famous artists such as Picasso, Monet, Miro and Henry Moore, and have learned something of art from different cultures. There are works of art and design on display to inspire and stimulate pupils, although there is very little evidence of work from Indian or African cultures on display or in pupils' sketchbooks. Pupils' skills in observational drawing are of a high standard and there is a very attractive display of reception to Year 6 pupils' sketches in the hall clearly demonstrating how effectively these skills are taught and developed.

78. Art and design is an effectively led and managed subject. The leader has worked very hard to improve assessment in art and design, with conspicuous success. The system of assessment adopted is being used by the school as a model for other subjects. Art and design is in very capable hands for continued improvement.

Design and technology

Provision in design and technology is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average and achievement is good.
- Teachers are very enthusiastic and make lessons fun and interesting.
- Pupils use their numeracy skills very well when designing and making products.

Commentary

79. Pupils' achievement is good and standards are above average in design and technology at the end of Years 2 and 6. Design drawings for Year 2 pupils' puppets are detailed, indicating a good knowledge of materials and suggesting realistic methods of joining them. Their evaluations are frank and some offer ideas about how they would improve their work next time. Older pupils' designs for moving monsters and shelters show how well pupils' numeracy skills are used in different forms when planning their work. A scrutiny of pupils' previous work indicates a good range of interesting activities. Digital photographs of their finished items show a very close resemblance to their design drawings.

80. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. In the very good lessons, teachers' planning is very detailed; activities are carefully structured to enable all pupils to build successfully on their previous learning. For instance in Year 6 pupils carefully and skilfully join their base structures together correctly recalling previous joining techniques when designing and making a shelter for *Action Man*. Year 2 pupils achieved very well when constructing hand puppets. They constantly referred excitedly to their designs and list of materials and persevered

with the challenging task of sewing felt and cloth. They quickly learnt the importance of carefully cutting in order to obtain two matching halves of the puppet. The teacher and the teaching assistant provided very good support by using positive encouragement and by illustrating the correct way to thread a needle successfully.

81. Year 6 pupils spoke with considerable enthusiasm and knowledge about their design and technology work. They eagerly describe the various points to consider when designing a safe shelter, skilfully and accurately using specific vocabulary such as *camouflage*. They stressed the importance of accurate measuring. All pupils clearly understand the relationship between design and product.
82. The subject leader, who has not been at the school long, provides good leadership and management. She leads by example with her own very good teaching and enjoyment of the subject and has assisted colleagues with planning and evaluating pupils' work. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. Additional resources have been purchased and teachers' confidence and enthusiasm for the subject have also improved.

Music

83. In the Year 6 music lesson observed the teaching was excellent and pupils' achievement was very good. Standards were above average. Other pupils were heard singing in assembly. The quality of their singing was good. Pupils sang tunefully with real expression. Boys and girls participate fully in music making activities and the subject is enjoyed. Pupils experience a good range of musical experiences and music makes a very good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The subject is currently being managed well by the headteacher due to the absence of the subject leader. Staff training has been a priority as, in recent times, the school had a focus on the development of the creative arts. All staff now teach their own music lessons. Specialist staff teach a range of instrumental work, which adds to the quality of the musical experience in school.

Physical education

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average.
- The quality of teaching and learning is very good.
- The subject is led and managed very well.

Commentary

84. Physical education has a high profile within the school. All pupils have at least two hours of lessons each week and many opportunities are provided for extra-curricular activities and competition.
85. All pupils receive swimming instruction and standards are above average. School records show that about 95 per cent of pupils are able to swim 25 metres by the time they leave.
86. An inspiring assembly included a dance performance by pupils in Year 6, which indicated that standards are above average in this aspect of physical education. Pupils' very expressive movement conveyed contrasting emotions clearly and groups synchronised their actions well with the tempo of the music. The standards attained by pupils in a very good lesson for Years 1 and 2 were also above average. Pupils created short dance phrases based on the jobs done on board fishing boats. Their teacher's enthusiasm greatly motivated them, so that pupils were

totally absorbed in their dance, moving lightly on their feet and helping to evaluate their peers' performance well.

87. In a very good games lesson, the teacher's very good knowledge of games teaching, her enthusiasm and very skilful management of pupils led to them making very good progress. A very strong feature was the very good demands made on pupils to help to assess their own performance and record their progress, overseen by the teacher. The pupils responded very well to the challenges they were set, working hard to improve their skills and co-operating very effectively in groups.
88. The subject leader is highly effective. She exercises very strong leadership, inspiring her colleagues to improve their teaching. The training she provides for staff, including teaching model lessons, and her very effective monitoring of standards, planning and teaching have been the main factors in the raising of standards since the last inspection.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision in personal, social and health education and citizenship is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is very good at raising pupils' self-esteem and confidence.
- Pupils have numerous opportunities to take on responsibility.

Commentary

89. The school places considerable emphasis on developing pupils' personal development. All staff are extremely good at making the most of pupils' well-developed social and personal skills when they start school and developing those even further. Throughout the school there are frequent opportunities for pupils to grow in confidence, to be motivated in their learning and to succeed in all they do. For instance older pupils can elect to be considered for the positions of head boy, head girl and house captains. During the school day, there are many opportunities for all pupils to take responsibility, which they do with great eagerness, helping out in their own classes and with assemblies and lunchtimes.
90. Older pupils enjoy supporting the reception children, helping them to settle happily and confidently into school. They also assist the Key Stage 1 pupils with learning to read at lunchtimes. They take these responsibilities very seriously and encourage their reading partners to sound out words and to look at the illustrations for clues. The class and school councils ensure that breaks and lunchtimes are happy and harmonious by discussing maturely what is acceptable playground behaviour. For instance Year 6 pupils decided that allowing older pupils to play *British Bulldog* is not a good idea as *it is a very rough game and does not set a good example to Key Stage 1 pupils*. Year 6 pupils also demonstrate very good awareness of the importance of considering the needs of others in a community when they solve the dilemma of Key Stage 1 pupils being unable to see the contents of the hot lunch trays. They suggest placing digital photographs on the trays so Key Stage 1 pupils can choose what to eat more easily.
91. The subject area is well led and managed. The leader is in the process of devising an effective programme for drugs and sex and relationships education. All classes have sessions for personal, social and health education and citizenship weekly and pupils are skilfully encouraged to debate a wide range of pertinent issues.
92. The school is currently working towards achieving a *Healthy Schools Award* and pupils are made very aware of the importance of exercise, a healthy diet, and recycling issues. The outcomes of the provision are very good, as seen in pupils' very good attitudes and excellent

relationships. These are extremely positive features in helping to raise pupils' attainment and achievement.

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	3
Value for money provided by the school	2
Overall standards achieved	2
Pupils' achievement	2
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	2
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	3
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	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
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	2
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).