

INSPECTION REPORT

Sacred Heart RC Primary School

Peterborough, Cambridgeshire

LEA area: Peterborough City

Unique reference number: 110855

Headteacher: Ms Andrea Togher

Lead inspector: Mrs Helen Ranger

Dates of inspection: 28th February – 3rd March 2005

Inspection number: 267618

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 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	247
School address:	Tollgate Bretton Peterborough Cambridgeshire
Postcode:	PE3 9XD
Telephone number:	01733 262449
Fax number:	01733 267762
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Christopher Dodds
Date of previous inspection:	23 November 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

With 247 pupils, the school is a little larger than the national average. Its pupils are aged from four to eleven. The school is situated in the mainly residential area of Bretton in the north of the city of Peterborough. It serves the local Roman Catholic parish of Sacred Heart and also the parish of St Oswald, which entails some pupils having a journey to school of several miles. Pupils come from a range of social and economic backgrounds that are average overall. About three-quarters are from white British families and the remainder come from a variety of minority ethnic groups. About 5 per cent of all pupils do not speak English as their first or main language, but there are no pupils at an early stage of learning English. When children are admitted to the reception class, their attainment varies widely, but has been broadly average in recent years. The proportion of pupils identified with special educational needs is 19 per cent. This is in line with the national average and includes three pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need. Pupil mobility is low and a smaller than average proportion of pupils moved into or out of the school last year other than at the usual transfer times. The school is part of a group of schools in the local education authority that is working on a 'Creative Curriculum' project to forge more effective links between subjects and to enhance pupils' interest in their work.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
22223	Helen Ranger	Lead inspector	English as an additional language English Modern foreign languages Information and communication technology Music
11437	Tony Anderson	Lay inspector	
32142	Beryl Richmond	Team inspector	Mathematics Art and design Design and technology Physical education Personal, social and health education and citizenship
20301	Peter Isherwood	Team inspector	Foundation Stage curriculum Science Geography History

The inspection contractor was:

Altecq Inspections Limited
102 Bath Road
Cheltenham
GL53 7JX

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is an **effective** school with many good and very good features. Within a caring, Catholic ethos, pupils of all ages achieve well. As a result of skilled teaching, pupils reach standards that are above the national average. The leadership and management of the school are good and provide very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils make good progress overall in line with their capabilities, and those with special learning needs make very good progress.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning, behaviour and overall personal development are very good.
- The headteacher has a very clear vision and leads a dedicated staff team very effectively.
- The curriculum is innovative and is enriched well by a wide range of extra activities.
- Provision is particularly effective across the entire curriculum for the children in reception and in science throughout the school.
- While teaching is good overall, and often very good, the quality of teachers' explanations and their checks on pupils' progress varies too much.
- Teachers are acting to make assessment procedures more rigorous, but these are not yet in place in several subjects.
- Levels of unauthorised absence are high.

The school has improved well since its last inspection. Pupils' performance in national tests in both Year 2 and Year 6 has improved faster than the national trend. The many good features identified in the previous report have been maintained. Key issues from that time have been dealt with effectively. The attainment of the pupils in Years 3 to 6 is now better, subject leadership is stronger, and performance data is used efficiently to raise standards.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

Key: A - very high; 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.

Pupils' achievement is **good**, and standards are above average overall. Pupils from all backgrounds make progress that is at least good. Those with particular learning

needs, including the lowest- and highest-attaining students, achieve very well for their capabilities. The children in the reception class achieve very well and are on course to exceed the levels that are expected nationally by the end of the year in all areas of learning. This includes their language and mathematical development and is particularly so in their personal, social and emotional development. Pupils currently in Year 2 are working at above average standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science. By Year 6, attainment is above average in mathematics and well above average in English and science. In information and communication technology (ICT) and physical education, pupils of all ages achieve well and reach standards that are higher than those expected nationally. In history, pupils reach expected standards by Year 2 and above expected standards by Year 6. The inspection did not focus on other subjects.

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is **very good**. Behaviour and attitudes to learning are very positive. Attendance is above average. However, unauthorised absence rates are high because a significant minority of parents fail to provide reasons when their children are away from school for a short time.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is **good**. Teaching and learning are **good** overall across the school and often very good, especially in the reception class and in Year 6. Pupils make good progress in their knowledge, understanding and skills. Lessons are interesting and cater for the full range of attainment. There is effective teamwork between the teachers and support staff. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour very well and promote independence and co-operation. Occasionally, in the lessons that did not reach the usual good standard, teachers did not explain work clearly enough and did not check well enough that all pupils were making the progress they expected. The overall assessment and tracking of pupils' progress is very good in English and science and good in mathematics. It is not systematic enough in other subjects to provide teachers with the information they need to raise standards further, but the school has embarked on improvements to its procedures.

The curriculum is good and is enriched well by a range of extra activities that contribute to pupils' overall achievements, especially in sport and music. Staff care for pupils very well and offer high quality day-to-day pastoral support. There is a very effective partnership with parents that has a positive impact on children's learning, and there are good links with the wider community.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are both **good** overall. The very able headteacher gives a strong and purposeful steer to the work of the school and is supported well by her deputy. They lead a caring and committed staff team. Senior staff are effective and, working closely with the governors, have ensured that standards have risen well. The school's overall performance is monitored and analysed well to ensure its continuing development, and subject leaders increasingly contribute to this process. Financial and strategic planning are very thorough. The governance of the school is good and statutory requirements are met.

Parents hold very positive views of the school, and almost all are very satisfied with its provision. They feel their children achieve and behave well and that standards of care are high. Pupils are also very positive. They enjoy school, like the people around them and feel that they learn well.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Ensure that the revised curriculum is monitored by effective assessment procedures in all subjects to check pupils' achievements.
- Ensure that teaching is consistently effective in all classes, especially the quality of teachers' explanations to pupils and how pupils' understanding of what they have learned is checked.
- Work with parents to reduce the level of unauthorised absence.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils' achievement is **good** overall, and attainment is **above average**. Pupils do especially well in the reception class and in Year 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Both the youngest and the oldest pupils make very good progress because of very skilled teaching.
- Pupils in all age-groups who have particular learning needs achieve very well.
- Pupils do very well in science.
- The school's performance in national tests has improved well over recent years.

Commentary

1. Pupils' achievement is better now than at the time of the previous inspection and standards of attainment are higher overall. The school has acted well to remedy the weaknesses that were identified previously in Years 3 to 6, particularly in the achievements of the more capable pupils in mathematics and science. These pupils now make very good progress. Effective leadership and monitoring across the school are promoting the rise in standards.
2. Children are catered for very well in the reception class. They only have one year in this school in the Foundation Stage¹ of their education, and they make very good progress in all areas of learning². They are on course to attain levels that are above those expected nationally by the end of the reception year. In personal, social and emotional development, standards are well above expectations.
3. In the 2004 assessments of pupils in Year 2, results were well above the national average in reading and mathematics and in the highest 5 per cent of schools in writing. When compared with schools with similar intakes, results were well above average in mathematics and in the highest 5 per cent nationally in both reading and writing. The improvement in results over the past five years has been faster than the national trend.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
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¹ The Foundation Stage covers both nursery and reception years. In this school, it is the reception year only.

² The nationally agreed areas of learning are personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development.

Reading	18.2 (17.0)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	17.5 (16.5)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	17.9 (17.2)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 40 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

4. Inspection findings are that pupils currently in Years 1 and 2 achieve well overall, and very well in science. Attainment by Year 2 is above average in all aspects of English, including reading and writing, and in mathematics and science.

5. In 2004, the school's results in the National Curriculum tests in Year 6 were in line with the national average in English, mathematics and science. The school exceeded its target for English but did not meet its challenging mathematics target. Compared with schools whose pupils achieved similar scores when they were aged seven, the results were above average in English and average in mathematics and science. Over the past five years, as with Year 2, the results for this age-group have improved at a faster rate than the national trend. However, the results for Year 6 in 2004 were not as high as recent previous years because the group of pupils had a higher than usual level of special educational needs that restricted their attainment in the tests.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.3 (30.4)	26.9 (26.8)
Mathematics	27.3 (29.1)	27.0 (26.8)
Science	28.6 (30.3)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 42 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

6. Inspection findings are that pupils achieve well overall in Years 3 to 6 because of good teaching. The pupils currently in Year 6 achieve very well and reach above average standards in mathematics and well above average standards in English and science. Their progress in writing has improved particularly well compared with the assessments taken when they were in Year 2.

7. The school caters well for pupils from all backgrounds. Boys and girls make similar progress. Both the lowest-attaining pupils with special educational needs and the higher-attaining students achieve very well because of the support they receive from teachers and teaching assistants and because work is matched well to their abilities. The pupils who are identified with particular gifts or talents make very good progress in relation to the targets set for them. Pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds make similar progress to other pupils in their classes. The small proportion whose first language is not English are supported very well and make very good progress.

8. In the other subjects that were inspected in detail, achievement is good in ICT and physical education, and pupils attain standards above those expected nationally. In ICT, they apply their skills very well in all aspects of their work. Pupils achieve well in history, and attainment is in line with the levels expected

nationally by Year 2 and above expectations by Year 6. The inspection did not focus on the other subjects of the curriculum, but samples of work in these indicate that pupils' achievements are at least satisfactory and often good.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **very good**. Their personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is **very good**. Attendance is **good** and punctuality **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The vast majority of pupils exhibit very positive attitudes and behaviour in the classroom and around the school.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development promotes their personal development very well.
- Attendance levels have improved well and are above average.
- The present levels of unauthorised absence are high, and a minority of parents are not supporting the school's efforts in this area.

Commentary

9. The school has maintained high standards in this aspect of its work since its previous inspection. It has improved attendance rates well, which were a weakness at that time.
10. Almost all pupils behave very well in lessons, around the school and in the playground. Their attitudes to one another and to the teaching and support staff are consistently very good. From the earliest stages, children in the reception class develop very good attitudes and co-operate very well because of the very good role models provided by adults. When moving around the school, most pupils display very good attitudes and care for their fellow pupils. There are just a few examples when small groups of pupils are a little noisy or boisterous. This is usually on the rare occasions when lessons are not stimulating or when a few pupils find it difficult to settle down after playtime. In the excellent lessons seen, pupils were very attentive and co-operated very well with the staff. A whole-school assembly demonstrated the impressive ability of the vast majority to sit very respectfully and attentively, as they were asked to reflect on a thought-provoking question posed by the teacher.
11. Informal discussions with a number of pupils and the questionnaires completed by pupils at home show that they are very happy at this school and that they feel they are making good progress. Inspection evidence supports these views. Pupils are provided with a very wide range of opportunities to enhance their personal development, and examples observed included taking responsibility for organising their own learning and helping with assemblies. In addition, the school council is enhancing the range of opportunities for personal development, and every pupil in the school now has a 'voice' in the way the school is developing.
12. The provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is very good. A high level of spirituality was evident, for example, in the observed assemblies, and elements are in evidence through subjects, such as science, history and music. In an effective lesson that promoted pupils' personal and social education, pupils were invited to consider the key strengths of their fellow pupils and to offer their own thoughts on how they might improve the local environment. Pupils' moral and social development is also enhanced by the many opportunities for working and playing in pairs and small groups and for speaking and listening. Most pupils have a clear understanding of the difference between right and wrong. Bullying and harassment are not tolerated

and pupils are confident that any incidents will be dealt with effectively. There have been no recent exclusions of pupils. The promotion of the cultural development of pupils is strong, including the multi-cultural aspects. Many displays are used very effectively to promote and demonstrate the richness and diversity of the world in which we live.

13. Attendance rates are now above the national average. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. However, the level of unauthorised absence is four times as high as the national average and unusually high for a primary school. The main reason is that a significant minority of parents do not support the school in providing prompt explanations for their children’s short-term absence. Additionally, the school is not proactive in following up all unexplained absences. This is unsatisfactory. The developing use of external support on attendance issues, such as that provided by the educational welfare officer, is a positive initiative.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	3.0	School data:	1.6
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.

14. Pupils’ attitudes, behaviour and personal development are very much linked to the very positive ethos of this school and, taken together with the very good promotion of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, this aspect is a major strength of the school.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is **good**. Teaching, learning and assessment are **good**. An **effective** curriculum is enriched **well** by extra activities. The school provides a **very good** standard of care for pupils. There is a **very good** partnership with parents and other schools and **good** links with the wider community.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **good** overall and are **very good** in the Foundation Stage. Assessment procedures are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers plan lessons well to cater for the full range of pupils.
- High expectations of behaviour and the promotion of very good relationships have a positive impact on learning.

- Children get a very good start in the reception class.
- Pupils of all ages work well, both independently and collaboratively.
- A few lessons are not of the high quality that is usually seen.
- Several subjects lack effective assessment procedures, although the school is working to remedy this.

Commentary

15. The school has maintained the good quality of teaching identified by the previous inspection, and a higher proportion of very good teaching was observed this time.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 38 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2 (5%)	15 (39%)	16 (42%)	5 (13%)	0 (0%)	0 (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.

16. The quality of teaching and learning in reception is very good and this has a very positive effect on raising standards. Lessons are very well planned and children are given a range of activities which cover the areas of learning very effectively. Support assistants are used very effectively to develop children's learning.
17. In Years 1 to 6, there are many noteworthy features in teaching and learning. In all age-groups, planning caters well for all attainments. Expectations of all pupils are good. In Year 6, these features are particularly well developed and are promoting very good learning. Across the school, there are strengths in how the staff encourage and engage the pupils and in how positive relationships are formed. These ensure that pupils enjoy learning and remain motivated. Behaviour is managed very well in a calm and orderly atmosphere in the vast majority of lessons. The teaching assistants work closely with the teachers and are briefed well. They give effective support to the organisation and conduct of lessons and give individuals or small groups extra attention as needed. Teachers' planning includes very effective cross-curricular links that make work relevant and meaningful for the pupils.
18. Teachers plan lessons that provide support to lower-attaining pupils and challenge to higher-attaining pupils. Pupils with special educational needs learn very well because of very effective planning by teachers. Pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need receive very good support. Individual education plans are of a very good quality. Targets are linked very effectively to the English and mathematics aspects of the National Curriculum. The higher-attaining pupils are often given work that is planned specifically to challenge and extend them. As a result, they feel stretched and achieve very well. Teachers cater very well on an individual basis for the small number of pupils whose first or main language is not English.
19. A significant strength of the school is the ability of teachers to promote pupils' independence in learning. They are given frequent opportunities to plan and develop their own learning. They work well, either alone, in pairs, or in small groups, and acquire good skills of collaboration and co-operation.
20. While the great majority of lessons seen were at least good, a small number had a few weaker features. Occasionally, more capable pupils are not challenged enough and become bored or restless. In a few lessons, teachers did not explain tasks clearly, and this led to wasted time while pupils sorted out what they should be doing. There are inconsistencies in how well teachers check pupils' understanding of their work during lessons. For example, some

are very skilled in methods such as the use of small whiteboards used by all pupils to show their ideas or answers to the teacher, but this is not always the case. The 'plenary' session of lessons is not always long enough or used efficiently to assess how well pupils have understood their work. The use of marking and individual target-setting is often very good, especially in English and science, but not consistently so in other subjects and in all classes.

21. A key issue from the last inspection was for the school to improve its assessment procedures. This has been achieved particularly well for the children in the Foundation Stage and in English and science across the rest of the school. Pupils' achievements are measured and analysed regularly, and periodic targets are set and tracked. These measures are contributing to the rise in standards, especially in writing and science. Assessment in mathematics is good in many respects, although the analysis of test performance and the use of targets with pupils are not as thorough as in English. The school has recently introduced more systematic assessments in ICT. In other subjects, assessment is relatively informal, but is a priority for improvement that is currently receiving attention. The senior managers appreciate that in order to guarantee the success of the recent revisions to the curriculum and how it is taught, they need more detail of how well pupils are doing in the knowledge, understanding and skills of each subject. They are developing good assessment criteria based on the key learning objectives that they set for pupils.

The curriculum

The overall quality of the curriculum is **good**, with a **good** range of extracurricular activities. The accommodation and learning resources are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is innovative and creative with subjects linked together well.
- Extracurricular provision enriches the main curriculum well, especially in sport.
- The provision for pupils with particular learning needs is very good.
- Pupils are prepared very well for later stages of education.
- The school employs its staff and learning resources well to benefit pupils.

Commentary

22. There has been a good improvement in the curriculum since the time of the last inspection, and this is having a significant impact on the standards achieved by pupils. The national strategies for English and mathematics are very well established and used flexibly to meet the school's needs. There is a broad range of worthwhile activities and experiences that cater well for the needs of all pupils. The curriculum meets all statutory requirements, including those for religious education and collective worship.
23. The school has worked well on increasing creativity and enjoyment in its curriculum, and ensures that subjects are linked together well to make learning meaningful for pupils. Children in reception receive a good quality curriculum

covering the six areas of learning for the Foundation Stage, and this ensures they are very well prepared for their next stage of education. Particularly strong emphasis is placed on personal development, communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. There is a new four-year planning cycle in Years 3 to 6 that is planned well to ensure that all pupils are suitably challenged. In particular, there are very good opportunities for pupils to use literacy and ICT skills across the curriculum. Pupils have very good opportunities to develop their investigative skills in science. There is a strong emphasis on evaluating and monitoring the quality of provision.

24. Pupils benefit from a curriculum that is effectively enriched by visits and visitors. There is a good range of extracurricular clubs for artistic, foreign language and musical activities, and a very wide range of sports. Year 6 pupils participate in a residential visit. Pupils benefit from specialist teaching in French, sport, art and music, and this contributes greatly to good standards and the enjoyment of these subjects.
25. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. There has been good improvement in maintaining the high standards in the provision for pupils with special educational needs since the previous inspection. Pupils are provided with a very good range of activities which match individual needs and ensure that pupils achieve very well. Planning is equally effective for gifted and talented pupils and for those whose first language is not English.
26. Pupils are very well prepared for subsequent stages of learning. There is a strong emphasis on personal development so that pupils become responsible individuals and keen learners. There are good procedures to ensure that pupils move successfully to their next class, and an initiative to ease the transfer between Years 2 and 3 has been successful. The school works very closely with the local secondary schools to ensure a smooth transition for pupils. Because they have above average standards in English, mathematics and science, this enables pupils to start the secondary curriculum successfully.
27. There are sufficient classroom teachers to deliver the curriculum well. They are assisted by a good allocation of learning support assistants who are well trained, managed and deployed so that they make a good contribution to pupils' learning. Accommodation is good, but because of the open plan layout, noise levels sometimes impinge on the learning of pupils in other classes. The school has its own chapel, which contributes significantly to pupils' spiritual development. There is a small, well-used library. There are extensive well-kept grounds. Classrooms and other areas are clean, tidy and well organised. A particular feature of the school is the high quality display that stimulates interest and supports learning. Resources are good. In lessons, pupils have the necessary relevant resources, which are up to date and in good condition.

Care, guidance and support

The provision for pupils' care and welfare is **very good**. The procedures for supporting, advising and guiding pupils are **good**, and those for seeking and acting on pupils' views are **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff know their pupils well and provide a very high degree of welfare and pastoral support.
- The school monitors pupils' individual needs and development well.
- There are very good systems to seek and act on pupils' views of the school.

Commentary

28. The school has maintained its good provision in this aspect of its work. Child protection procedures are effective and have benefited from a recent review. Both the teachers and support staff know the pupils well and provide a very high quality of day-to-day welfare and pastoral support to individual pupils. Accordingly, every pupil has access to several adults in whom they can have trust and confidence. Pupils' academic performance and personal development are monitored well, both formally and informally by the school. The advice and support resulting from this monitoring is effective in promoting pupils' overall progress. Pupils with special educational needs and those whose first language is not English receive very good support in school. There is very early identification of need, and as a result, very effective strategies to improve learning are put in place as soon as possible. As a result, pupils achieve very well.
29. The school maintains a safe site through regular inspections and action plans. The caretaker is very effective in this area and he is ably assisted by the whole staff, who work hard to maintain the site and building in a good and safe condition. Risk assessments are also undertaken for aspects of provision, such as school trips. The induction arrangements for pupils entering the school are good. Children in reception receive very good support from all adults, and this has a very positive impact on how quickly they settle into school and develop their social skills.
30. Pupils' views are considered very well. They have individual and group targets for aspects of their work and personal development and are involved in defining these. The school acknowledges pupils' thoughts and achievements through surveys and classroom discussions, and more formally in assemblies. The school council helps to underpin the very positive ethos of the school by providing all pupils with the opportunity to 'have a say' about how the school is run and managed.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has a **very good** partnership with parents. Links with the local community are **good** and links with other schools are **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Both parents and children like the school, and parents work very closely with staff to support their children's learning.

- Communications with parents are very good and keep parents well informed about their children's progress.
- The school works well with the community and other schools to support pupils' learning.

Commentary

31. Since the last inspection, the school has maintained its very good partnership with parents, and this remains a significant strength. Almost all the parents who contributed to the inspection through the questionnaire and parents' meeting are very supportive of the school.
32. The information provided by the school through the prospectus, annual governors' report to parents and the regular and informative newsletters is of a good standard. Effective curriculum information is also provided to parents. Annual academic reports on children's progress are of a very good standard, and these are supplemented by impressive half-termly progress reports.
33. There is very good support for parents of children with special educational needs. Parents are fully involved at all stages, and as a result, they are able to help their children at home to progress in their learning. In addition, the headteacher and her enthusiastic staff are readily available to assist parents with any problems or concerns. The school regularly consults parents on a range of issues, and there is a clear determination on the part of senior management to continue to improve school-home relationships for the ultimate benefit of the children.
34. There is a very effective and hard working 'Friends' association, which is very supportive of the school. Parental attendance at school concerts, celebrations and sports days is very good, reflecting the joint efforts of the parents and school to work together.
35. Good use is made of the wider community to enhance the quality of education through frequent visits and visitors, and there are very strong links with both the parishes served by the school. There are very good links with other local primary and secondary schools. These include staff liaison which benefits the curriculum and very effective sporting links. The transitional arrangements and 'taster days' in preparation for pupils' eventual transfer to secondary school are very good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are **good**. The headteacher is **very good** and is supported **well** by the senior staff. Governance is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides a very good lead and is committed to high standards.

- The spirit of teamwork among staff and governors is strong and has a positive impact on standards.
- Staff with responsibility for key areas of the school are effective.
- Governors give valuable and efficient support to the school.
- Strategic planning is very effective.

Commentary

36. The school has maintained the good and very good features of leadership and management that were reported in its previous inspection. It has developed subject leadership roles and its use of pupil data, as required in key issues for improvement.
37. The headteacher has a very clear vision for the school's development. She fosters very good relationships with staff and governors and establishes a purposeful ethos which encourages continuous improvement. This has led to the rising trend in pupils' academic achievements and the maintenance of high standards in many aspects of the school's work. The headteacher works closely with her able deputy and senior staff to ensure that the vision and aims of the school are translated into effective action, for the benefit of pupils. Overall, there is effective leadership and management by key staff of the Foundation Stage, core subjects and the needs of minorities, such as those with special educational needs, the gifted and talented, and pupils whose first language is not English. The management of other subjects is developing well. Staff are monitoring efficiently the impact of recent curriculum changes and setting up detailed assessment arrangements in all subjects to ensure that these have a positive impact on pupils' achievements.
38. Teamwork is central to the school's success and there is a strong commitment evident in the staff as a whole, including the classroom support staff, lunchtime staff and the cleaning and maintenance team. Very good relationships at all levels contribute greatly to the positive ethos and establish the very supportive atmosphere for learning for the pupils.
39. The school evaluates many aspects of its performance very well and plans for its further development efficiently. All interested parties contribute to the school's plans for development, including parents and pupils, whose views are gathered through regular surveys and meetings. The overall written improvement plan is linked well to the good arrangements for the performance management and training of staff.
40. The governors support the school well and are led very well by their chairman. Governors have a wide range of relevant expertise that informs their meetings. They are well briefed about many of the school's strengths and weaknesses as a result of regular visits and the good quality of information they receive for meetings. They are prepared to question and challenge the staff when necessary. While they liaise well with subject leaders, the absence of rigorous assessment procedures in several subjects means that they, like the subject leaders themselves, are not in a position at the moment to guarantee that their decisions are having a positive effect on standards. They have correctly

identified the need to consider in more detail the value for money that results from their decisions, in terms of pupils' achievements. Governors have good quality information to support their overall long-term planning. The school has a falling roll due to local demographic trends, and governors have analysed the implications of this very well. The chair of the finance committee has established a very clear overview of the likely developments of the next few years and shares this well with his colleagues. Governors are prepared to take difficult decisions when necessary. Statutory requirements are met well.

41. The budget is managed very well by the headteacher and governors. Day-to-day financial procedures are thorough. A recent audit was satisfactory and the school has acted swiftly on its recommendations for further improvement. The school's income is lower on average than that of many schools nationally. In view of the good quality of education provided, this represents very good value for money.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	663 323	Balance from previous year	40 415
Total expenditure	683 904	Balance carried forward to the next	19 834
Expenditure per pupil	2 581		

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**.

42. Children get off to a very good start in reception. Attainment on entry covers a wide range but is at the expected level overall. Children achieve very well because of the very good quality teaching and learning. As a result, almost all are on course to attain the expected learning goals by the end of the reception year, and a significant number are likely to attain above this level. The curriculum is good and caters equally well for all children. There is a very small number of children who have English as an additional language; they are fully involved in all activities and understand all instructions. There were no children identified with special educational needs at the time of the inspection but there are very good procedures in place to identify and support these if they arise. A very small number of gifted readers have been identified, and their needs are being met very effectively.
43. There is very good leadership in the Foundation Stage, and the co-ordinator manages her staff very well; this results in very good teamwork. Adults provide the children with very good role models – this has a particularly positive impact on personal, social and emotional development. Assessment is very good and is used very well to develop children’s learning.
44. There has been good overall improvement since the previous inspection. The school has successfully addressed national developments in the education of this age-group, and there has been improvement in the quality of teaching and learning. The outdoor play area has improved significantly since the previous inspection and is used very effectively in all areas of learning.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Role-play is used very effectively to develop social skills.
- There is very good emphasis on developing independence skills.
- Adults act as very good role models for the children.

Commentary

45. Teaching and learning are very good. The teacher and support staff provide a wide range of very good activities and, as a result, children achieve much better than expected. They are likely to far exceed the goals that are expected nationally by the end of the year. From the moment they enter the classroom in the morning, children are made very welcome and are valued. Routines, such

as choosing an activity, develop independence and social skills very well. The indoor 'medical centre' and outdoor 'home corner' are used very effectively to develop social skills when children are given very good opportunities to carry out role-play which involves co-operating with others. Children are trusted to work without direct adult supervision at times; they respond very well to this and, as a result, they develop personal and social skills very well. All adults are very good role models; they expect very high standards of behaviour and children respond very well to this. Children's emotional development is very good because all adults care about and value everyone. This is seen in whole-class discussions when adults listen and show great interest in what children are saying. Children relate very well to each other, act in a mature manner, persevere at tasks and all follow adult instructions very well.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is very good emphasis on developing reading skills, particularly letter sounds.
- Role-play is used very effectively to develop language skills.
- Adults provide a very good range of activities to develop speaking and listening skills.
- Gifted children receive very good support.

Commentary

46. Children achieve very well because of the very good quality teaching and learning. They are on course to attain above the nationally expected levels by the end of the reception year. Adults provide very good models of speech in the whole-class discussion sessions. Children develop their communication skills very well in the role-play situations when they act out home or medical scenes. Stories and rhymes are used effectively to develop speaking and listening skills and to develop writing, for example by producing a 'Get Well' card for Jill from 'Jack and Jill'. The very good use of materials that develop children's knowledge and understanding of letter sounds has a very positive impact on improving children's ability to read simple words. A very small group of gifted children have been identified and they are given work which matches their needs very well; as a result they make very good progress. Mark-making and writing skills are developed very effectively, with many children writing words of uniform size. Most children read sentences, build up simple words using letter sounds and they write a number of words. The highest-attaining pupils recognise double letter sounds and show much better than expected reading and spelling skills. Children respond well to the conversational French sessions, particularly in registration periods, that give them access to an additional useful language skill.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are mathematically challenged very well in registration periods
- Resources, including sand and water, are used very effectively to develop learning.
- Mathematical vocabulary is effectively developed.
- Very good relationships ensure pupils learn very well.

Commentary

47. Children achieve very well because of very good quality teaching and learning. By the time they leave reception, children are likely to have attained and, in many cases, exceeded the expected goals. Sand and water play is used effectively to develop an understanding of capacity. In registration periods, the teacher develops mathematical skills very well when she asks children to count the number present and then work out how many are absent. Children have access to a wide range of mathematical equipment in the classroom which develops their skills very effectively. Resources are used very effectively in lessons to develop understanding. Adults reinforce learning very well by the way they use the language of mathematics. Relationships with children are very good, and this has a positive impact on developing very good learning patterns. All children count beyond ten, with most counting to at least 20. They add and subtract single digit numbers, recognise a range of two- and three-dimensional shapes and understand language such as 'light' and 'heavy'.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are given a wide range of very good quality activities to develop learning.
- The outside environment is used very effectively to develop learning.
- There are good opportunities to use ICT.

Commentary

48. Children achieve very well because the teacher and support staff give them very good quality activities to develop an understanding about the world around them. They are likely to attain above expected levels by the end of the year. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. Children develop a very good understanding of the weather and associated vocabulary because the class teacher gives them time to talk about it in the morning registration sessions. Adults link areas of learning together very well to develop learning very effectively. Children show very good understanding of their bodies because a doctor visited to talk to the children and then adults provided a range of very

good activities to reinforce this work. The outside environment is used very effectively to develop children's understanding of living things; for example, they observe and comment about bulbs they have planted. Construction skills are developed very well in 'free-choice' sessions because the teacher provides children with suitable equipment. Children have better than expected ICT skills because the computer is used very regularly and adults give very effective support when necessary.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Indoor physical education sessions are very good.
- Outdoor activities have a very positive impact on physical development.

Commentary

49. Children achieve very well in their physical development because of the very good quality teaching and learning. By the end of reception, children are likely to attain standards which are higher than those expected nationally. They are taught to use pencils, scissors, brushes and other tools well for their age. They show a good sense of space, move with good co-ordination and balance at better than expected levels. In sessions in the hall, lessons are very well planned. Tasks challenge the children very well and, as a result, there is rapid progress in their learning. Children learn about technique very well because, for example, the teacher stresses the importance of balance when using apparatus. There are high expectations of behaviour, and children respond very well, showing very good attitudes and behaviour. Children develop their physical skills very well when they link movements together, both in floor work and on apparatus. The outdoor area is used very effectively to develop physical skills in a less formal way – there are opportunities for children to run and chase and use equipment such as trikes. There has been very good improvement in the outdoor provision since the previous inspection, including a canopy to enable more use of the area.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Adults provide activities which interest the children.
- Resources are used effectively to develop learning.
- There are very good links with other areas of learning.

Commentary

50. Teaching and learning are very good and, as a result, there is very good achievement for all children. By the end of reception, children are likely to attain higher levels than those expected nationally. Adults provide activities which interest and stimulate the children and which are linked effectively to other areas of learning. Children are rightly very proud of the 'straw skeleton' pictures they have produced to link with science work on their bodies. Techniques, such as letting paint run and mix, are used very effectively to produce very high quality 'Winter Paintings'. 'Free choice' sessions are used very effectively to let children learn for themselves about different colours and painting techniques. Children develop their musical skills very well when they join in songs, play percussion instruments and join in hymns in school assemblies.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE

Modern foreign languages (French and Italian)

A small sample of the school's foreign language provision was inspected. Pupils in all age-groups are taught French and an after-school Italian club is offered. The lessons in French are sporadic, but are followed up well by class teachers, who give pupils frequent opportunities to practise and extend their language skills. Teachers regularly give instructions or ask questions in French and pupils respond accordingly. In the lesson seen with a Year 4/5 class, pupils showed good recall of a wide range of everyday phrases and responded to the teacher in extended sentences where appropriate. The teacher's subject knowledge was strong and the lesson was conducted at a brisk pace, enabling all pupils to contribute well. Pupils enjoy exploring other languages, are confident and keen to learn more. The provision enhances the curriculum for pupils and promotes their social and cultural development well.

English

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Effective leadership and management have promoted rising standards in recent years.
- Good teaching ensures that pupils achieve well overall, although the quality of lessons varies quite widely.
- Pupils practise and apply their literacy skills very well through other subjects.
- Assessment procedures in lessons and for the overall tracking of achievement are very good.

Commentary

51. The school has improved well since its previous inspection. The results in national tests in Year 2 and Year 6 have risen faster than the national trend over the past five years. The 2004 assessments of pupils in Year 2 were well

above the national average in reading and within the highest 5 per cent nationally in writing. The results for Year 6 were in line with the national average and not as strong as for the previous two years. This was because the year group had a higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs than previously. Performance was good when compared with the schools that achieved similar results when the same pupils were tested at the age of seven.

52. Inspection findings are that pupils achieve well overall at both key stages. This includes both boys and girls. Those with special educational needs, the most gifted, and pupils whose first language is not English often achieve very well because the school effectively considers their particular needs and provides work that is at a suitable level.
53. Attainment is above average in Year 2. The current group of pupils includes more with special learning needs than last year, so that standards are not quite as high. Pupils are attentive listeners and capable speakers. They read well for their age and have positive attitudes to reading. They write in a range of styles with good spelling and word-building skills.
54. The attainment of pupils currently in Year 6 is well above average in speaking, listening, reading and writing. This class is making very good progress because of extremely skilled teaching. Pupils are efficient listeners and very articulate and confident speakers. They read and understand a very wide range of texts, and are enthusiastic readers who are developing their analytical and critical skills well. They use the good home/school reading logs very well to record their achievements and ideas about books. Their writing is extensive and interesting. It shows a good use of vocabulary and strengths in spelling, punctuation and handwriting. The school has addressed the criticism in its previous inspection report that there were too few opportunities for creative writing, drafting and writing for other subjects. These are now strong features.
55. Teaching and learning are good overall, and this is why standards are rising. However, teaching varied widely in the lessons seen during the inspection, from satisfactory to excellent. Improving the consistency of teaching is an area for further development.

Example of outstanding practice

An excellent literacy lesson was seen with pupils in Year 6 that exemplified the skill of the leading literacy teacher.

Pupils made very good progress writing reports. The teacher had organised the lesson very carefully to ensure that time was used very efficiently. She focused on both the lower-and higher-attaining students in turn, clearly explaining the features of high quality writing that she expected. Her questioning of pupils and constant checking of their understanding were very strong and ensured that pupils were fully aware of how well they were doing, through both oral and written comments. Pupils have individual writing targets and were able to assess their progress towards them. The excellent quality of relationships in the class that the teacher promotes meant that pupils settled readily to work, co-operated very well with their peers, were confident and determined to do their best. Tasks were matched very well to their capabilities and held their interest. The teacher exploited the class's current excitement about their work on Roman Life by linking history and English work very effectively. Pupils used computers as an integral part of the lesson to research and present their work.

56. The most effective features of teaching across the school are the planning for the full range of pupils in each class, the good attention to developing speaking and listening skills, interesting links between subjects, the promotion of high quality relationships, very good examples of marking and target-setting with pupils, and the good use of ICT. Less effective lessons were characterised by unclear explanations and instructions and by teachers not ensuring pupils' full attention at times.
57. Leadership and management are good. Several experienced staff currently share the responsibility for English, and all make valuable contributions. They are rightly monitoring the impact of recent changes to the curriculum and to the way that classes are organised, through observing lessons, sampling pupils' work and tracking individual achievement. A strength of the monitoring is the determination to ensure that points for improvement are followed through successfully. The co-ordinators and class teachers analyse pupils' performance very well to raise standards, especially through the frequent detailed reading and writing assessments.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

58. Pupils apply their English skills very well to other subjects. Their good listening and speaking abilities equip them well in discussions. Their reading and writing skills mean that they cope well with new learning across the full range of subjects. They acquire subject terminology efficiently. Recent curricular revisions ensure frequent, well-planned opportunities for pupils to research and write in science and the humanities subjects in particular; these activities frequently combine pupils' literacy and ICT skills very effectively.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are achieving well throughout the school and the most capable pupils are achieving very well.
- Teachers use computer programs well to enhance teaching and learning.
- There is a good whole-school focus on improving pupils' ability to solve problems.
- Assessment is effective overall, but teachers do not always assess pupils' understanding enough in lessons, and aspects of the analysis of tests are not rigorous enough to support further improvement.
- Not all parents feel positive about homework activities

Commentary

59. Current standards are above average by Year 2. In 2004, results were well above both the national average and the average for similar schools. Over the past four years, test results have mostly been above average or well above

average compared both with schools nationally and with similar schools. The trend of improvement over the last five years has been above the national trend.

60. Standards are above average by Year 6. Over the past four years, the results have ranged from average to well above average compared with schools nationally and similar schools, apart from 2001, when results were lower. In 2004, results dipped to average because there was a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the year group and pupils had experienced some disruption to their learning earlier in the school. The trend of improvement over the last five years has been above the national trend. This is because teaching and learning are consistently good and pupils' progress is tracked well. The current inspection confirms an improved position compared with the time of the last report, especially on the key issue of improving attainment in Years 3 to 6. This is because of good teaching and learning and effective tracking of pupils' progress.
61. Pupils make good progress and achieve well overall from Year 1 to Year 6. The school has responded very well to the key issue in the previous report that identified that higher-attaining students were not being sufficiently challenged. These pupils are achieving very well throughout the school. Gifted pupils in Year 6 have a very good opportunity, through a business link, to work with a governor to develop their mathematical and ICT skills.
62. The quality of teaching and learning is good. In particular, teachers use ICT well to develop pupils' understanding. It was seen being used very effectively to teach pupils how to calculate the area of compound shapes and how to read different scales. The visual support that pupils received contributed greatly to their understanding and the rate at which they learned. The school has identified problem-solving as an area for further development and is currently using the final part of some lessons well to enable pupils to apply the mathematical skills they have been learning.
63. Test results are used well to track pupils' progress regularly and to support teachers' planning. However, assessment in lessons is not always strong because teachers do not check on all pupils' understanding by, for example, asking them all to respond by writing an answer on a small white board. The final part of lessons is sometimes too brief for the teacher to assess pupils' learning. Pupils do not consistently have sufficient understanding of what they need to do to improve, for example, by having their own mathematical targets.
64. Some parents expressed concern that the main homework scheme in the subject requires pupils to opt into it and involves a monetary contribution. No pupils are excluded from participation because of an inability to pay, but the school recognises that communication with all parents in this regard is an area for development, and they are working to improve this. The homework scheme is growing in popularity.
65. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in provision across the school. Planning is monitored and work is analysed regularly, and she has

begun to monitor teaching and learning in lessons. She has identified the further analysis of test performance as an area for development, so that curricular targets can be set. There has been a good improvement in provision since the previous inspection.

Mathematics across the curriculum

66. The use of mathematical skills across the curriculum is good and supported by the school's commitment to forging effective links between subjects. In particular, in science, pupils measure, collect and analyse data. Skills are also developed well in ICT, design and technology, history and geography, enabling pupils to apply their mathematical skills in practical situations.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are very keen to learn and achieve very well.
- There is very good emphasis on developing investigative skills
- Lessons are very well planned to cater for the full range of pupils.
- Marking is used very effectively to develop learning.

Commentary

67. In the 2004 National Curriculum assessments, pupils in Year 2 were above average based on teacher assessments, and those in Year 6 were average in the tests, compared with all schools nationally and with similar schools. The 2004 Year 6 cohort included a larger than average number of pupils with special educational needs, and these results went against an otherwise rising trend. Inspection evidence shows that the present Year 2 are attaining above average levels and Year 6 well above average, with a small group who are particularly gifted working at high levels.
68. Achievement in science is very good because teachers set work at levels which meet the needs of all groups of pupils. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress because they are very well supported. Those pupils who are particularly gifted are given very challenging, high level work to ensure that they are fully stretched. There has been very good improvement since the previous inspection, when test results were well below average in Year 6. The school has worked hard to address the key issue of improving standards, especially for the more capable pupils, and has succeeded. There is now more emphasis on investigative work, assessment is used very effectively and work challenges all groups of pupils. The amount of time spent on science, another key issue, has been very successfully addressed.
69. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. Pupils learn very well because teachers plan lessons very effectively. They question pupils very well

to assess what they already know and build on this by providing them with investigative activities which both interest and challenge them. Almost all pupils respond very well to the expectations of very high standards of behaviour – they want to learn and improve their scientific knowledge and understanding. They discuss what they are doing thoughtfully. In groups, they often make very good suggestions on how to develop investigations. Pupils develop their knowledge and understanding very well when they read the positive but instructive comments on their work. The quality of marking throughout the school is of very good quality. Pupils in all classes use ICT very well to develop learning. They access the internet for information, they produce graphs based on their investigative work, use sensors to track experiments and record their work to a high standard.

70. There is very good leadership and management in the subject and this has a very positive impact on raising standards in the subject. The co-ordinator is a very good role model in her teaching – she has identified and successfully addressed areas of weakness and strives to raise standards even higher.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Group work is planned and organised well to ensure that pupils achieve well.
- Teachers and teaching assistants ensure that pupils learn basic skills efficiently.
- The co-ordinator's effective leadership and management are ensuring that standards rise.
- Pupils' skills are practised and applied very well across a wide range of subjects.

Commentary

71. The school has improved its provision in ICT well since the last inspection. Standards are higher and the overall quality of teaching is better. Resources are good and, together with a programme of regular staff training, pupils now reach standards by both Year 2 and Year 6 that are above those expected nationally. Pupils of all abilities achieve well. By Year 2, pupils use computers independently in a wide range of tasks, including research for topics and individual work on basic literacy and numeracy skills. This includes pupils with special educational needs, who are supported well by relevant software, often with the extra help of an adult. By Year 6, pupils use computers and other technology as a seamless part of their everyday work. Their levels of independence and confidence are high, and their teachers organise lessons so that they have easy access to computers whenever needed.
72. Teaching and learning are good. The school organises most of its units of work through whole-class demonstrations by the class teacher, followed up by

individual practice by pupils. This is successful because the staff have secure subject knowledge, explain activities clearly, ensure that lessons build systematically on pupils' learning, and make very good use of the available resources. The teachers make good use of support staff to supervise individuals and small groups using computers. One of the teaching assistants effectively leads groups from the full age range to practise skills that have been introduced by their teachers. She also helps to maintain the hardware, and this ensures that machines are working efficiently. A useful daily club is held for pupils who wish to learn to touch type, and this is having a positive impact on the quality and speed of pupils' work.

73. The co-ordinator leads and manages the subject well. She works closely with teachers on their planning. She has recently devised an assessment document to track pupils' achievements, and this will help the school to monitor standards. Teaching in lessons is monitored informally. The co-ordinator has rightly identified the need for the monitoring of teaching and learning at first hand to be more systematic to ensure that the revised curriculum is being implemented efficiently.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

74. The way that ICT is used across the curriculum is very good, and is a significant strength of the school's planning. Pupils are regularly encouraged and enabled to practise and apply their skills in a wide range of subjects. The oldest pupils in particular use computers as a regular tool to support their learning. In literacy, pupils record their work well and enhance its appearance. In mathematics and science, they manipulate and present data well and are beginning to use spreadsheets and sensors independently. Pupils of all ages use Internet research and computer-based units of work effectively in subjects such as science, geography and history, including for homework tasks. Relevant programs enhance lessons in art and design. In design and technology, pupils learn to develop their models using control technology, for example, to make them light up or move, or to produce animations. Pupils use digital cameras, microscopes and web cams as appropriate in their work. ICT skills are also used well in activities that are not based on subjects. For example, school councillors have produced multimedia presentations for the whole school to illustrate a playground project.

HUMANITIES

75. **Geography** was not a main focus of the inspection, and there is insufficient evidence to make a judgement on overall provision. Only one lesson was seen because of timetable arrangements. Analysis of work and discussion with pupils show that standards are at least at expected levels. There is very good use of ICT in Year 2 to develop pupils' understanding of different countries in the world. Year 6 pupils show good knowledge and understanding of India and world geography, but their knowledge of physical geography is not as strong. The lesson seen was of very good quality – it was very well planned with

activities that both interested and challenged the pupils. Assessment procedures do not fully guarantee step-by-step skill development. This has been recognised as an area for development by the school. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The very recently appointed co-ordinator has not yet had time to have an impact on the subject.

History

Provision in history is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers use interesting methods to teach history.
- History is very well linked to other subjects.
- Questions are used very effectively to assess what pupils understand in lessons, but formal assessment procedures are not sufficiently developed.

Commentary

76. Standards in history are at the expected level by the end of Year 2 and above expected levels by the end of Year 6. Pupils of all attainment levels achieve well because of the quality of teaching and learning and the 'hands on' experiences provided for them. By the end of Year 2, pupils have satisfactory knowledge of famous people and describe differences between the past and present. By the end of Year 6, pupils show good understanding of the periods studied and show good knowledge and understanding of sources of historical evidence.
77. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. Teachers use methods which catch the pupils' imagination. They visit museums and have had recent opportunities to meet and discuss the Roman period with a 'Roman soldier'. Literacy lessons are used very effectively to develop an understanding of the Roman period. Research on the Internet and emails sent to 'a Roman' enable pupils to improve their knowledge and understanding of what life was like in Roman times. Teachers expect very high standards of behaviour, and pupils respond very well to this, allowing teachers to concentrate on giving support where necessary. Day-to-day assessment of understanding by the use of questions in lessons is very good, but the lack of formal systems means that the step-by-step development of skills as pupils move through school is not guaranteed.
78. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has only just taken on the role and she has not yet had time to monitor recent changes to the curriculum fully. She has made a good start by carefully and effectively checking and evaluating teachers' plans. There has been good improvement in history since the previous inspection. The quality of teaching and learning has improved from satisfactory to good, and the standards attained by the oldest pupils are higher.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

79. The inspection did not focus on **art and design**, **design and technology** or **music**. A few lessons were sampled in these subjects and pupils' work was examined where possible. Judgements cannot be made on overall standards or provision. In all three subjects, the school has rightly identified the need to make its assessment procedures more rigorous. At present, these do not systematically identify the National Curriculum levels that pupils reach or give sufficient information about how pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills progress. This information will be vital to ensuring the success of the recently revised curriculum.
80. In **art and design**, the work on display in Years 3 to 6 was of good quality and included several examples of very good collaborative art. There is a good range of work overall, including three-dimensional projects. Less work was displayed in the younger classes, but that seen in Year 2 was of good quality. ICT is used well to support this subject. Leadership and management are good. The co-

ordinator has recently revised the programme of work to ensure that effective cross-curricular links are planned. She checks teachers' plans before lessons are taught to ensure that pupils are challenged sufficiently and that pupils' different learning styles are considered. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 have benefited from a visit to Kew Gardens, and the school plans to extend the use of visits further. Pupils and staff benefit greatly from the expertise of the chair of governors, who teaches art regularly in school.

81. In **design and technology**, no lessons were seen, but the pupils' work on display was of good quality. The school has recently revised its programme of work to link in with the four-year planning cycle in Years 3 to 6. Pupils' work is planned to take advantage of effective cross-curricular and multi-cultural links. Evidence from planning indicates that skills are taught progressively and the principles of design, making and evaluation are covered well. Leadership and management are good. The subject leader is effective in checking the teachers' planning before topics are taught. She has not yet started to monitor teaching and learning in lessons, and this is an area for development.
82. In **music**, the school makes good use of specialist teaching and regular musical activities to ensure that all pupils are fully included in music-making. It employs staff with considerable subject expertise to lead class lessons, the choir, instrumental tuition and larger-scale events, such as hymn practice. In the small sample of lessons seen, teachers' methods built well on the youngest pupils' natural singing abilities and promoted careful listening and confident performance. A multi-sensory approach has been established in recent years and is having a positive impact on standards, especially with younger pupils who have experienced it from the start. The same overall approach is used in the good quality violin tuition and this consistency of method helps to promote pupils' learning well. All pupils learn to play the recorder as part of their regular class lessons, and this contributes well to their overall development in the subject. Teachers' assessments of pupils' knowledge and skills are rightly a current focus for improvement. Teachers do not sufficiently track the progression in pupils' skills across the school for their planning to be as rigorous as it could be.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are achieving well.
- Pupils benefit from specialist teaching in gymnastics, hockey and dance.
- The curriculum is enriched very well.
- The co-ordinator is an excellent teacher of gymnastics.
- Assessment systems are not well established.

Commentary

83. Standards are above average by Year 2 and Year 6, and pupils are achieving well. Evidence for these judgements comes from observing lessons and from school data. Standards are good because pupils benefit from knowledgeable teaching and learning and the school places a high emphasis on fitness. Pupils are achieving very well in hockey because they benefit from specialist teaching, which has enabled some of them to become county players and participate in successful school teams. The co-ordinator is an excellent teacher of gymnastics, which is leading to very good achievement by pupils. Her example also benefits the teaching staff who work alongside her. Pupils are achieving well in swimming, as most attain their 25 metre certificates when they are in Year 3 or Year 4. A member of staff is a choreographer who supports the teaching and learning of dance well. Attainment in dance, as indicated by the co-ordinator, is currently good in the infant classes and satisfactory in the junior classes. Year 6 pupils have a good opportunity to participate in outdoor adventurous activities on their residential visit. The curriculum is enriched very well because pupils have good opportunities to participate in extracurricular clubs and competitive events.
84. Teaching and learning in lessons ranged from satisfactory to excellent and is good overall.

Example of outstanding practice

An excellent gymnastics lesson was seen with pupils in Years 4 and 5 that demonstrated the competence of the subject co-ordinator and why standards are improving.

Pupils achieved very well because of knowledgeable and enthusiastic teaching. The lead teacher ensured that all pupils were clear about the expectations for their learning, and consequently pupils tried their very best to achieve or exceed what was expected of them. The teachers created a purposeful, challenging yet supportive atmosphere in which all pupils felt secure. Pupils were encouraged to visualise what they were about to do before carrying out the task. Pupils found their work on straddle and backwards rolls challenging, but persevered very well and all, including some initially reluctant pupils, managed to achieve a straddle and backward roll by the end of the lesson. This was because assessment was used very well by the teachers to give extra support and encouragement where it was needed. More able pupils were extended well by working on their sequences with the second teacher. No time was lost. Pupils were very supportive and encouraging of each other and keen to demonstrate their work to the class. They were fully involved in the evaluation of their own and others' work and appreciated their peers' comments.

85. Teaching and learning are good overall because most teachers have good subject knowledge and, where it is less secure, the co-ordinator is giving support and training. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and achievement, and consequently pupils try their best and achieve well. The use of time varies – it was excellent in the best lesson but elsewhere was not used well enough to ensure that all elements of the lesson worked effectively.
86. Leadership and management are very good. The headteacher has co-ordinated this subject for two terms. She has a very good understanding of its strengths and areas for development. The priority this term is to develop the teaching and learning of gymnastics. Subsequently, there will be a focus on dance to link it to the new four-year planning cycle in the junior classes. The school is working to improve its assessment systems which currently do not give enough indication of how pupils' skills develop over time. Improvement has been good since the previous inspection, when provision was satisfactory.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

87. Although only one lesson was seen in this area of the school's work, the school provides good opportunities for pupils to develop their learning. The school is revising its current programme of work to link with the new four-year planning cycle in Years 3 to 6. There are many other planned opportunities for pupils to develop into confident, healthy and motivated individuals who want to learn and succeed. Pupils benefit from an enriched curriculum that enables them to learn outside the school day from clubs, visits and visitors and from specialist teachers. There is a strong emphasis on keeping fit. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. The results of this provision are seen throughout the school. Pupils are polite, responsible and friendly – they work and play together in harmony. The programmes for sex and relationship education and drug education are in place. The school council is working well, and all pupils have an opportunity through their representatives to voice their views and influence change in the school.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement	Grade
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	2
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	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	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
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	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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