

INSPECTION REPORT

ST AGNES RC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Bow, London

LEA area: Tower Hamlets

Unique reference number: 100949

Headteacher: Susan Chandler

Lead inspector: Tony Painter

Dates of inspection: 13 – 16 September 2004

Inspection number: 267720

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

© Crown copyright 2004

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary
School category: Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils: 3 - 11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll; 213

School address: Rainhill Way
Bow
London
Postcode: E3 3ER

Telephone number: 0208 980 3076
Fax number: 0208 983 1770

Appropriate authority: Governing body
Name of chair of governors: Mr M Kelly

Date of previous inspection: 17/05/1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is an average sized Catholic voluntary aided school with below average numbers of pupils leaving and joining during the year. Around half of the pupils are from white backgrounds, while the rest have a wide range of cultural origins with the largest groups from African or Caribbean backgrounds. A small number are from asylum seeking families and three are from traveller backgrounds. Thirty-six pupils have home languages other than English (including Twi, Lithuanian and Yoruba) and are at an early stage of learning English. Most pupils live in the area around the school, which has many elements of severe deprivation. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, at 41 per cent, is well above the national average. Children joining the school have well below average overall attainment for their age. Currently, 41 pupils (19 per cent, around the national average) have identified special educational needs. Nine pupils, 4.2 per cent, have statements of special educational need, which is well above the national average. The school received a Schools Achievement Award in 2003.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Members of the inspection team | | | Subject responsibilities |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|--|
| 21512 | Tony Painter | Lead inspector | Mathematics Science Art and design Design and technology |
| 9173 | Sarah McDermott | Lay inspector | |
| 31975 | Kay Andrews | Team inspector | The Foundation Stage Special educational needs English History Geography |
| 15023 | Ali Haouas | Team inspector | English as an additional language Information and communication technology (ICT) Physical education Music |

The inspection contractor was:

Altecq Inspections Limited
102 Bath Road
Cheltenham
Gloucestershire
GL53 7JX

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be made initially to the contractor. The procedures are set out in the leaflet 'Complaining about Ofsted Inspections', which is available from Ofsted Publications Centre (telephone 07002 637833) or Ofsted's website (www.ofsted.gov.uk).

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 and subjects | |
| Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities | |
| QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL | 10 |
| 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 | 18 |
| AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE | |
| SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2 | |
| PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS | 29 |

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **good** school that provides good value for money. Good quality education and a very positive ethos are contributing to improving pupils' standards.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Good teaching ensures pupils achieve well through the school, reaching above average standards by Year 6.
- Very strong leadership from the headteacher gives a clear focus for continuing development and improving standards.
- The school successfully meets the needs of all pupils.
- Very good relationships contribute significantly to pupils' personal development and ensure very good attitudes to learning.
- Curriculum co-ordinators and governors are insufficiently involved in development planning and monitoring.

The school has made good progress since the last inspection and maintained an upward trend of performance. Most of the issues raised have been successfully remedied although there is further room for improvement in implementing subject co-ordinators' roles and the use of assessment. Teaching has improved, with better provision for Foundation Stage children and pupils with special educational needs. New buildings and resources contribute positively to the quality of pupils' experiences.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

| Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with: | all schools | | | similar schools |
|---|-------------|------|------|-----------------|
| | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2003 |
| English | C | A | A | B |
| mathematics | A | B | A | A |
| science | A | C | C | E |

Key: A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average

Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.

Pupils achieve **well** from their well below average attainment on entering the school. All pupils make good progress through the school. Those new to learning English quickly establish themselves and learn effectively with the other pupils. Pupils with special educational needs are given very good support and achieve very well.

Children settle quickly and make good progress in the nursery and reception classes, particularly in personal and social development. Many now reach the goals children are expected to reach by the time they start Year 1. National Curriculum test results have varied from year to year, reflecting the relative abilities of different groups of pupils. The most recent published results show overall average attainment. Current Year 2 pupils maintain this overall attainment, although standards in mathematics are below average. The overall trend of Year 6 results to 2003 has been upwards. The most recent 2004 results are a little weaker although

this group of pupils had high levels of special educational needs. Current pupils are reaching above average levels of attainment.

The school ensures pupils' **very good** spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and has very high expectations. As a result, pupils' relationships and behaviour are very good. They have very good attitudes and interest in all school activities. Attendance is satisfactory overall.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a **good** quality of education with **good** teaching and learning. Throughout the school, teachers' high standards and very good relationships successfully motivate pupils and lead to good learning. Teachers give good explanations and presentations, often making very good use of resources to help all pupils to learn well.

The good curriculum gives pupils a wide range of experiences, enhanced by very good activities outside lessons. Teachers use information from the school's improved assessment systems to match tasks to pupils' different abilities, particularly in English, mathematics and science. Good links with parents and the local community contribute to pupils' learning.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are **good**. Governance is **satisfactory**.

The headteacher's leadership is very good. Her clarity of vision and high aspirations have led to improvements in subject co-ordinators' roles, particularly in English, mathematics and science. However, other subject co-ordinators play a less developed role and overall, co-ordinators are insufficiently involved in identifying and monitoring developments.

Good management places emphasis on raising standards and makes increasing use of self-evaluation to identify developments with links to finances and the professional development of all staff. Financial control is particularly strong.

Governors are supportive of the school and make efforts to ensure that statutory requirements are met. They play little part, however, in determining the strategic development of the school or monitoring outcomes.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are positive about the school's work, particularly teachers' high expectations. Pupils enjoy the very strong relationships and the very wide range of activities available to them.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- involve curriculum co-ordinators and governors more actively in identifying, planning and monitoring developments;
- and, to meet statutory requirements:
- ensure all necessary information is included in school publications.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils' achievement through the school is **good**. From well below average on starting, they reach **above average standards** by the time they leave the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching ensures pupils achieve well through the school.
- Children in the nursery and reception classes make rapid progress.
- Very good support for pupils with special educational needs ensures their involvement in lessons and good progress.

Commentary

1. Children joining the nursery class have a wide range of attainment and there are significant variations from year to year. However, overall they have well below average attainment, and some have very limited experiences. They settle quickly and make particularly good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. This is a reflection of the rich and well-planned curriculum, well-established routines and very positive relationships. Staff work together well and plan a wide range of interesting and practical experiences in all areas of learning to ensure overall good progress. By the time they begin Year 1, most of the current children are likely to reach the expected standards at this age, especially in their physical and mathematical development.
2. In Years 1 and 2, overall good teaching ensures pupils' good achievement. Variations in the school's results in national tests at the end of Year 2 reflect the different abilities of the relatively small groups of pupils involved. The 2003 results reached the national average in reading and writing, although results in mathematics were below average. These results were all well above the results in similar schools. Initial examination of the 2004 results suggests that these standards have been maintained although results were weaker in writing, reflecting the higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Current overall attainment in Year 2 is in line with that found nationally, with pupils reaching average standards in English and science. Standards in mathematics remain below average although a greater emphasis on problem solving is helping pupils to improve their skills.

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

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| Reading | 16.3 (14.0) | 15.7 (15.8) |
| Writing | 14.7 (13.8) | 14.6 (14.4) |
| Mathematics | 16.1 (16.0) | 16.3 (16.5) |

There were 24 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

- Pupils achieve well in Years 3 to 6, where effective teaching builds securely on pupils' earlier attainment. Despite some year-on-year variations, the school's Year 6 national test results have improved at a much faster pace than the national trend in recent years. The 2003 results were well above the national average in English and mathematics and compared very favourably with those in similar schools. The results in science were relatively weaker, with lower proportions reaching the higher Level 5, but overall still reached the national average. Results in 2004 were less strong, again reflecting very high proportions of pupils with special educational needs. However, initial examination suggests that results will be above average in all subjects. Current Year 6 pupils are attaining at above average levels overall, maintaining the school's standards.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| English | 29.1 (28.9) | 26.8 (27.0) |
| Mathematics | 29.7 (28.0) | 26.8 (26.7) |
| Science | 28.8 (28.2) | 28.6 (28.3) |

There were 20 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

- Throughout the school, pupils reach average standards in information and communication technology (ICT). Although this is lower than the standards reported in the last report, the school has established substantial new resources and methods for teaching the subject. Effective training has given staff much greater confidence, and this is now leading to better teaching, learning and rising pupils' achievement.
- Very effective support from teachers and teaching assistants ensures that pupils with special educational needs make very good progress. All such pupils take a full part in all lessons with staff making good use of close personal knowledge of pupils to help them learn. Class teachers have high aspirations and these help many of these pupils to achieve the nationally expected standards.
- Pupils with English as an additional language achieve well against their prior attainment. Pupils are effectively targeted and those in the early stages of learning English or are late arrivals benefit from intensive support within a small group by the ethnic minority achievement (EMA) teacher.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **very good**. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **very good**. Attendance levels are **satisfactory**. The punctuality of pupils is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have outstandingly positive attitudes to work and learning that help them to do well.
- Teachers set high standards for conduct and pupils behave extremely well.
- Relationships are exemplary and have a very positive impact on pupils' achievements.

Commentary

- In all lessons, pupils show very positive attitudes to their work. They listen attentively, maintain concentration and have good working habits. They mix well and enjoy very good and

harmonious relationships with adults and classmates throughout the school. Pupils with English as an additional language and those from ethnic minority backgrounds are keen to participate fully in activities.

8. Good opportunities to support pupils' spiritual development are provided, particularly in assemblies and mainly through the "Here I am" programme. Pupils are enabled to benefit from a range of experiences through links with other schools and to visit and attend religious feasts of other religions. Pupils are regularly given time to reflect on particular themes and many show confidence when expressing feelings and thoughts. Assemblies are well used for hymn singing and the response of pupils and their zest for singing is in itself a spiritual experience.
9. There are whole-school rules and pupils are effectively encouraged to learn right from wrong. They respond positively to the high expectations that staff have of them. Older pupils support younger ones and act as role models. The response of all members of staff to any poor behaviour and instances of bullying is managed in accordance with school policies in a consistent way, and both pupils and parents recognise that this is handled quickly and efficiently. Older pupils are given tasks both in class and around the school that develop their sense of responsibility well.
10. Opportunities are used well to develop pupils' awareness of other cultures, particularly through units in geography when pupils study other places such as St Lucia. The school organises special occasions to celebrate Carnival and draws on the community to share in other cultures. However, the school does not sufficiently draw on pupils' own backgrounds to fully develop their understanding of Britain as a culturally diverse society.
11. The school works hard to promote good behaviour and this is very successful. All adults set good examples to pupils in the way that they treat everyone with respect. Teachers and classroom assistants make their high expectations clear, and pupils understand what is expected of them. Pupils know and understand the rewards that they can earn in their classes for good work, effort and behaviour. At playtimes, pupils play well together harmoniously. In the dining hall, pupils chat happily together and welcome visitors.

Attendance

12. Pupils' attendance is satisfactory, as it was at the time of the last inspection. Most years it is in line with national averages. The school is aware of a recent increase in absence and is doubling efforts to give a very clear message on expectations of regular attendance. It is particularly stringent on requests for holidays in term time and, following the borough guidelines, marks such holidays as unauthorised absence unless there are compelling reasons otherwise. There is close monitoring of attendance. The school is careful to follow up any unexplained absence of pupils causing concern on the first day, but has not extended this good practice to all pupils. The steady attendance of the majority of pupils is an important factor in their good achievement.
13. Punctuality throughout the school day is good. Regular and consistent morning routines are well understood by parents and children. It is rare to have more than a handful of pupils a few minutes late. Registration is swift, effective and enables pupils to get down to productive learning very quickly.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

| Authorised absence | |
|--------------------|-----|
| School data: | 5.6 |
| National data: | 5.4 |

| Unauthorised absence | |
|----------------------|-----|
| School data: | 0.2 |
| 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 school provides a **good** quality of education with good teaching and learning. The good curriculum gives pupils a wide range of experiences, enhanced by very good activities outside lessons. Good links with parents and the local community contribute to pupils' learning.

Teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching is **good**, ensuring all pupils learn **well**, with the strongest teaching in the Foundation Stage and in Years 3 to 6. Teachers make **satisfactory** use of the improving assessment information, although their personal knowledge of pupils is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers' very good relationships capture pupils' attention and encourage them to learn.
- Good organisation and well-established routines in lessons ensure good use of time and pace to learning.
- Teachers' high behaviour expectations encourage pupils' good behaviour and hard work.
- Very good support enables pupils of all backgrounds and abilities to make good progress.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 34 lessons

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|----------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| 0 | 9 (26%) | 20 (59%) | 5 (15%) | 0 | 0 | 0 |

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

14. The good overall quality of teaching shows further improvement from that seen in the last inspection. In particular, no unsatisfactory teaching was observed and the proportion of very good teaching has improved. This has been the result of the effective action taken to improve the curriculum, planning and teachers' skills. Parents and pupils are appreciative of the good standard of teaching.
15. Foundation Stage teaching is consistently good in both nursery and reception classes and this ensures children learn well. A particular strength lies in the personal, social and emotional development, which is extremely effectively promoted. As a result, children of all backgrounds settle quickly and confidently into school and enjoy the clear and well-established routines. The very strong relationships between children and staff give children confidence to try hard and do their best. Staff teamwork is very strong and ensures children have access to a wide range of interesting and practical experiences. Children's learning is supported by good resources and relevant visits to places of interest to widen their experiences. Staff use good systems for checking what children can and cannot do in order to organise their teaching groups, set targets and plan children's next steps.
16. Throughout the school, teachers and other staff create a very caring atmosphere for learning with very positive relationships. Teachers' organisation of their classrooms and lessons is very good and ensures that little time is lost. They make their very high expectations of both work and behaviour very clear, consistently supporting pupils positively. As a result, pupils' behaviour is excellent and they show confidence and enthusiasm as they engage in all activities. These very positive attitudes have a significant impact on pupils' learning and achievement. In a small number of satisfactory

lessons, particularly in Years 1 and 2, however, teachers do not do enough to set a good pace to the learning.

17. Teachers' enthusiasm captures pupils' attention very well. A significant contribution is the very good use teachers make of resources. In particular, the new interactive whiteboards installed in some rooms are used with confidence and flair to aid explanations and activities. A history lesson in Year 4 made particularly effective use of artefacts from World War II to excite and motivate pupils.
18. All teachers have very good personal knowledge of pupils and they use this effectively to set increasingly secure levels of challenge. For example, teachers question pupils well, often rephrasing at the right levels to challenge pupils with different levels of attainment. Discussion sessions encourage pupils to think hard about their work, and to apply their earlier learning well. Pupils usually rise to these challenges, taking their thinking further and raising the pace of learning. Teachers make and record increasingly detailed formal assessments although the use made of these is variable from class to class. For example, many teachers establish targets for groups of pupils but few set targets for individuals to help them to recognise what they need to do to improve.
19. Lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs have very good support. Well-trained teaching assistants have good understanding of pupils' needs and of how they can help them to learn. They play an effective part in ensuring that these pupils access all activities in the classroom and in the wider school. Close working with pupils individually and in groups often leads to very effective learning.
20. The support provided for pupils with English as an additional language is good, with most being well organised in partnership with class teachers. Work done in withdrawal groups closely follows that done by other pupils in the classrooms. Pupils therefore benefit from small group interaction where learning is carefully tailored to match their level of attainment and the stage of their language development. For instance in a numeracy lesson, the teacher effectively adapted the content of the lesson, revisiting the difficulties the pupils experienced in the previous day with odd and even numbers. She used a good range of methods, including effective demonstrations, language modelling and a lot of reinforcement. By the end of the lesson, pupils' grasp and fluency in using the concept had been effectively strengthened. In the best teaching, constant attention is paid to the language used in the lesson and careful rehearsal is used to enable these pupils full access to learning. This was amply demonstrated in a science lesson in Year 4 where the oral rehearsal of key science vocabulary was later reinforced by well-designed worksheets enabling pupils to record their findings. However, on occasion, individual pupils are not sufficiently carefully monitored in terms of their involvement in the lesson. Sometimes pupils miss the opportunity to benefit from good models when they are inappropriately paired with other pupils new to English.

The curriculum

The school provides a **good**, relevant and inclusive curriculum that meets pupils' academic and personal needs well and which is enriched by **very good** opportunities for learning beyond the school day. Accommodation and resources are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good provision for extra-curricular activities is used well to enhance and extend learning.
- The quality of support for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- The emphasis and importance accorded to English, mathematics and science has led to some inconsistencies in the rest of the curriculum.

Commentary

21. The curriculum is well planned and provides a good range of interesting activities for all groups of pupils. It places important and very effective focus on the development of pupils' personal and social skills, encouraging pupils to develop good skills and make the right choices. The school has appropriately invested time and effort in improving standards in literacy and numeracy. This has been effective and has led to an improving trend of results but has taken a relatively large amount of time from the teaching week. Co-ordinators are aware of this and have begun to consider ways of using their subjects to enhance and develop pupils' basic skills. The school is now well positioned to carry this forward and improve provision in other subjects.
22. All pupils have full access to the curriculum, including activities organised outside the school day. Boys and girls participate on an equal footing in most activities on offer. The school has a positive inclusive ethos and robust procedures for monitoring access and providing support where it is needed. This is reflected in the school's thorough analysis of pupils' performance in English, mathematics and science and use of a range of intervention strategies to raise achievement. Teaching assistants contribute well to making the curriculum inclusive especially in their support of pupils with different backgrounds, abilities and needs. Teachers are aware of pupils' linguistic and cultural backgrounds and use this knowledge to encourage them to use their languages and share them with others, for instance when the register is taken. However, the school could draw more on pupils' languages and cultural backgrounds and openly promote or celebrate them. Although the school tries hard to develop pupils' insights into other cultures, planned opportunities for them to discuss issues related to living in a multicultural society are relatively limited.
23. The school offers pupils many activities to extend their learning both during and after the school day. A very good range of visits are organised to enhance learning in a number of subjects and through links with neighbouring schools. All teachers contribute to running a club, from football and gardening to French, drama and cookery. These activities together with the annual residential journey add to the rich diversity of opportunities open to pupils to improve their skills and learn new things.

Care, guidance and support

The care, welfare, health and safety of the pupils are **good**. The school provides **very good** support, advice and guidance for pupils. The school values the views of the pupils and involves them **satisfactorily** in daily tasks.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The security of the school site is very good.
- The school places a high priority on supporting its pupils and is very effective in finding the right support for each individual need.

- Pupils new to the school are settled in very effectively.
- There are insufficient formal and regular opportunities for pupils to have a voice in the work and development of the school.

Commentary

24. The school has good procedures to ensure pupils are kept safe while at school. Health and safety systems are well established and all staff have received training in fire safety and first aid. Child protection procedures are satisfactory although recent refresher training has not adequately included all support and non-teaching staff. In practice, all staff know what to do should they be suspicious of child abuse. Pupils with particular medical needs are very well looked after. When pupils enrol with unusual health conditions, the school ensures that at least one member of staff is updated on the latest medical support techniques. Pupils are particularly safe and sound while on the school premises. Nursery and reception children each have their own secure play areas so that they can run around and explore independently and safely.
25. The school is very effective in giving well-directed advice and support to each pupil. This area remains a strength of the school. The small size of the school and the high number of well-established staff mean adults know the needs of the pupils very well. All pupils say that they have no qualms about approaching staff if they are anxious or upset. Pupils come from a wide variety of backgrounds, including refugees, traveller children and children in public care. The school ensures well that the staff are up to date on each individual pupil's needs. Pastoral care is particularly strong and the school goes out of its way to support both the pupil and the family. A very useful bank of local information leads to very effective links with outside agencies for the benefit of the pupils and their parents. Pupils with special educational needs are given very high calibre assistance, resulting in confident children who achieve much higher results than expected.
26. Staff build up a good picture of individual personal development across the curriculum despite there being no specific weekly lessons for personal, social and health education. In particular, religious education lessons and the "buddy" system provide useful yardsticks. Academically, the school monitors pupils' progress carefully in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Consequently, it is able to move quickly and effectively to give extra individual support. For example, last year's splitting of Year 6 into two classes for more directed support paid dividends in the high achievement in the final tests. Monitoring of individual progress in the other subjects of the curriculum is less strong so support for pupils is of a more general nature and not always sufficiently tied to individual need.
27. New pupils are settled into school life very quickly. The nursery has well-tested procedures to introduce new children and their parents to the clear daily routines. During the inspection, two new children were barely distinguishable from their more established peers at the end of their first day as they happily discovered new activities and games. Pupils who arrive higher up the school are also introduced to St Agnes very effectively and settle to the new learning routines well. Pupils with home languages other than English, including late arrivals, are settled quickly and are fully integrated. Effective support is also provided for these pupils' social development and this clearly contributes to the progress they make. The school has developed an effective network of contacts with outside agencies and this is often used to support individual pupils to help them settle or in assessing accurately their needs.

28. The school is quick to listen to, and act on, individual concerns relating to pastoral care. However, the school is only at a preliminary stage in setting up more formal opportunities for pupils to understand the importance of citizenship and to have a voice in their school community. The school council only includes Year 6 pupils and has not had a proper meeting. Although Year 6 pupils were consulted about the idea of a council and the school did use the recent Ofsted pupil questionnaire, surveys of the pupils are not customary. The absence of a regular slot for personal, social and health education means not all classes are guaranteed a chance to discuss topical or school issues. However, many pupils, and in particular the older ones, play an active role in helping around the school with small chores and responsibilities.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are very appreciative of the quality of education for their children and support the school well.
- Very good links with the parish positively benefit pupils' personal development.
- Parents do not receive sufficient information about the curriculum and their children's progress to allow them to help learning.

Commentary

29. Parents continue to be supportive of St Agnes's and particularly like the fact that their children are happy at school and are expected to work hard. Attendance at school events is very good, with virtually all parents keeping their appointment to meet their child's class teacher. Parents appreciate the consistent routines of homework and the chance for them to have a window on to their children's work and progress. Many parents, particularly of pupils in the younger classes, regularly read with their children and complete the reading record. A small Home School Committee is good at organising raffles and cake sales, but suffers from limited backing because a significant number of families live at some distance from the school. The support from parents is an important factor in the contentment and high achievement of pupils at St Agnes.
30. The school values the input from parents and provides them with a satisfactory quality and quantity of information. It keeps parents up to date well with events and requirements through a variety of newsletters. The September meeting with the new class teacher is a good way to give an overview on learning for the year and to remind parents about homework routines. A number of teachers provide a useful written curriculum plan, but this practice is not consistent and overall information on the curriculum is not as forthcoming as it should be. Several parents are justified in wanting to find out more about how to help their children with their learning. This was a concern at the last inspection. There have been no recent curriculum information meetings and there is insufficient detail in the prospectus for new parents. Additionally, the prospectus and annual governors' report to parents omit several legally required items including detailed absence statistics, contact details and information on special educational needs and disabled access. Reports are useful in letting parents know the levels at which their

children are working and providing targets for improvement. However, teachers are not consistent in giving a clear written message to parents on how their children have progressed in each subject of the curriculum over the year. On a day-to-day basis, teachers are very approachable and always willing to give parents a verbal update on how their children are doing.

31. Links with the local community are good. The school makes effective use of the local Bow area to extend the curriculum and provide stimulating outings. New contacts via the Bow Community Project and the Tower Hamlets Partnership Programme are paving the way for increased community involvement and opening the school facilities to the local community. The partnership with the Catholic parish is particularly strong. It provides a firm foundation to the school's ethos aided by the regular visits of the parish priest, whether leading the weekly Friday assembly, providing counselling or playing an important part in the religious education curriculum. Well-established links with local medical and social support services are very beneficial to pupils with special educational or social need.
32. Liaison with other schools and colleges is good. Arrangements for pupils to move on to their secondary schools are effective and well organised. Pupils transfer confidently having already started an English and mathematics programme while still at primary school. A useful link with the local secondary school has boosted ICT, particularly as the head of department has been available to trouble shoot problems during the first week in the new ICT suite. The school has good links with other primary schools for sports events, although there is still more scope for sharing of ideas and innovations within the rest of the curriculum.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are **good** overall. The leadership and management of the headteacher are **very good** and senior staff give **good** support. The leadership of other key staff is **satisfactory**. Governors make a **satisfactory** contribution to the school's leadership and management.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher's clarity of vision, sense of purpose and high aspirations are creating strong teamwork and steering improvements.
- The school is very inclusive and very committed to meeting the needs of all groups of pupils.
- Subject co-ordinators have a greater role but do not sufficiently monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects.
- There is no clear evidence that the governing body is challenging the school or is monitoring the effectiveness of educational provision.

Commentary

33. Parent's view, that the school is very well led and managed by the dedicated headteacher, is fully justified. She is a very good role model because she is efficient, caring, approachable and ambitious for her pupils and staff. She is clear about how she wants to secure the best provision for a very good education for all pupils at the school. This forms the foundation of the school's very strong ethos of inclusion, giving all pupils equal opportunities to succeed. For example, she has good understanding of issues

related to improving provision for pupils with English as an additional language. She knows the pupils individually and in some cases has gained useful insights into their language and cultural backgrounds which she uses effectively in assessing their needs and monitoring their progress.

34. The headteacher is well supported by the two members of the leadership team who are equally committed and share her aspirations. The governing body, and particularly the chair of governors, is very supportive of the headteacher and very proud of the recent achievements of the school. New staff are exceptionally well inducted into the school and settle in well. They speak highly of the headteacher and the support she gives them, and as a result, she has created a stable, effective team with a commitment to ensuring that pupils enjoy coming to school, that they have high self-esteem and they reach their full potential.
35. Management of the school is good overall and there have been improvements since the time of the previous inspection. The professional development of both teaching and non-teaching staff is now very good and staff can point to ways that this has enabled them to improve their teaching. Co-ordinators are in place for every subject and have started to monitor provision, particularly in the core subjects. They play a greater role and have developed simple action plans to steer subject development. The school's administrative staff make a valuable contribution to the smooth day-to-day running of the school.
36. There are still some weaknesses at the middle management stage however. Co-ordinators' self-evaluation skills, particularly in subjects other than English, mathematics and science, are still at an early stage. There is no mechanism, for example, for them to move more clearly into school development planning as they have not had the opportunity to develop action plans that are properly costed and financed. Performance data is now thoroughly analysed and a useful and effective system for tracking the progress of individual pupils has been put in place. This has been a significant factor in enabling the school to raise standards. The setting of targets, as a result of this tracking, so that pupils are also clear as to where they need to improve their work, is only just starting.
37. The governing body is well informed about the work of the school through its working committees, including examination of standards. There is a clear commitment to the school and the local area, including the church. Governors rely heavily, however, on the professionalism of the headteacher, rather than increasing their own self-evaluation skills, for example through regular training. This limits their contribution to development planning and ensuring the accountability of the school.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

| Income and expenditure (£) | | Balances (£) | |
|----------------------------|---------|-------------------------------------|---------|
| Total income | 798,011 | Balance from previous year | 132,434 |
| Total expenditure | 836,011 | Balance carried forward to the next | 94,434 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 3,764 | | |

38. Financial planning is closely linked to school improvement planning. There have been substantial recent building improvements that have contributed considerably to the school

resources and provision. Management of these has been good and the associated financial planning has been effective. A large carry over on the budget has been directed for this purpose in recent years to ensure success, although this has not limited the quality or quantity of other resources. This work is almost complete and the school acknowledges that it now needs to move into more strategic planning that is carefully linked to other areas of school improvement. There are rigorous procedures for managing the school's budget on a day-to-day basis, and systems for ensuring that best value principles are applied. The level of funding per pupil is above the national average, but below that of other local schools. Taking into account, however, the low attainment of pupils on entry, the very good ethos and good teaching of the school and the school's success in raising standards by the end of Year 6, the school gives good value for money.

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**.

39. The provision for children in the nursery and reception classes is a strength of the school and has improved since the time of the previous inspection. Induction procedures are thorough and sensitive so children settle happily into school. Teaching is always at least good so children achieve well in all areas of learning. Good leadership enables all staff, including the nursery nurses, to work as an effective team. Staff are encouraged to address their own professional development and they do so enthusiastically. They are pleased that this is bringing about improvements in their teaching, enabling them to create a dynamic learning environment and raise standards.
40. Children are assessed constantly and competently so that individual needs can be fully met. In particular, children with learning and behavioural difficulties are identified early. Suitable strategies put in place at that time ensure they make very good progress.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children respond well to teachers' high expectations and are secure in their learning.
- Boys and girls behave very well and they work and play happily together.

Commentary

41. Teaching and learning are consistently good in this important area of learning. As a result, children leave their parents quickly and confidently. They are keen to get started on the wide range of interesting and fun activities that teachers prepare for them. Many children start in the nursery with skills that are very low and it is a credit to staff that children make such good progress over their time in both reception and nursery classes. Staff are bright and welcoming and use every opportunity to promote good personal and social skills. Few pupils are identified as having behavioural problems further up the school. This is without doubt because provision is so good in this aspect in both nursery and reception and any difficulties are dealt with effectively.
42. Class routines are thoroughly established so that children quickly understand what is expected of them, but within that, there is a strong element of choice, particularly in the nursery. This excites children and captures their imagination. They are so interested and so well supported that any immature or unacceptable behaviour is soon forgotten. Relationships are very good and children's learning is nurtured well. By the end of reception, children have a very good learning ethic. They work independently and confidently. Their concentration is good and they persevere to finish their tasks. Children's attainment is in line with that expected nationally by the end of the reception class.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision for communication, language and literacy is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Consistently good teaching and learning help children to achieve very well.
- Writing skills are particularly well developed by the end of reception.

Commentary

43. Most children are on course to reach the early learning goals by the end of reception because they are well taught. Children in the nursery love books and stories. They enjoy story times because staff prepare them so well with good quality puppets and models to create interest. The scene is set when a candle is lit and children understand that this is a special, quiet time for enjoyment. Children often do not speak clearly and confidently, but the good progress they make is evident in the remarkable differences between children who have been in the nursery for some time and the new intake. Role-play, for example in the garden centre, is purposeful because adults intervene to extend and develop speaking skills. Children enjoy independent early writing because they are given interesting and colourful implements to use and are encouraged to identify and write their own names.
44. Children entering the reception class still have below average language skills but have a good range of learning experiences. Their recorded work shows a progressive development of skills, well supported over the year. Children are developing a sound knowledge of phonics and have a bank of familiar words with which to read by the end of the year. They recall key events and characters in their stories. They speak clearly and confidently because they know that their contributions will be valued. Writing skills are particularly well developed. Children's recorded work is very well presented. Letter formation, by the end of reception, is legible and clear and more able children are starting to write simple sentences independently.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Enthusiastic teaching makes learning fun and helps children to achieve well.
- Adults use every opportunity to engage children in counting.

Commentary

45. Mathematical teaching and learning are very good because teachers plan well for lots of relevant practical activities that children enjoy. As a consequence of this, achievement is high and by the end of reception, children are likely to meet the early learning goals. Children in the nursery are motivated and engaged when they find small world teddies hidden in the sand and, with support, count and arrange them up to ten in a bed. They are thrilled at "mucky play" when the teacher paints their feet and hands with red paint for

them to make and count prints on large sheets of paper. They are so interested they do not want to stop when it is someone else's turn. Most count to ten by rote, but cannot relate the numbers to the prints.

46. Children who are new into reception search to find the right words to describe position. They enthusiastically count body parts and match them to a body puzzle. They find this difficult but the teacher's good sense of humour keeps them involved and on task. Many children are slow to answer questions but the teacher is persistent and this usually elicits an appropriate response. In their first lesson of using number fans, they soon get the idea and start to match a number to its name. Knowing a wide range of number songs and rhymes helps them to consolidate their knowledge.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very well planned opportunities for vigorous physical activity, particularly in the outside space, ensure children's development.

Commentary

47. Teaching and learning are very good in both nursery and reception because teachers are skilled in creating practical, well-resourced and imaginative activities. The majority of children are likely therefore to reach the expected goals by the end of the reception class. The outside area in both classes is used well to develop skills of control, confidence, balance and co-ordination. In reception, children's learning also benefits from very well planned lessons in the hall. In the nursery, younger children are nervous, but determined to have a go at "crossing the sea". With support and encouragement, they climb high up a ladder, move through a tunnel, "over the sea" and down the other side. Older nursery children have already learned how to spread their arms to help them balance. Although balancing skills are not well developed, they are proud of their achievements and keen to show them off to a visitor.
48. New reception children are beginning to play safely and be aware of their own and others' space when they move around the hall at different speeds. Although their spatial awareness is not well developed, the end of the lesson sees good progress. Children try hard to follow instructions but some find this difficult, although they are repeated again and again. By the end of the lesson, children are beginning to demonstrate some control and co-ordination when they hop, skip, jump and run, but their skill level is still quite low.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision for knowledge and understanding of the world is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching gives children many ways to learn about the world around them.
- Children's technological skills are well developed.

Commentary

49. Good teaching and learning ensures children achieve well. Most are in line to achieve the goals that are set for children of this age by the end of the reception year. This is because teachers use exciting topics to help children understand themselves and the world around them. For example, nursery children learn the names of various body parts and their roles. They also learn how to care for their bodies at the "feely" table where items include toothbrushes, combs, soap and a model head with wig for grooming. They explore and use everyday technological items, such as cameras, small tools, calculators and watches. They show interest and curiosity as they investigate the properties of compost in the "Garden Centre".
50. The picture is a similar one in reception. Children cook and prepare food regularly, observing safety and hygiene methods and becoming aware of the need for healthy eating. They share their Christmas biscuits with friends and enjoy other cultural traditions when they eat Caribbean food on a celebration day. Computer skills are developing well when children use a mouse confidently to drop and drag and to choose different sized brushes to create pattern and colour, using a paint program. Geographical skills benefit when they walk around the locality and look at different types of homes.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision for singing is very good and makes a valuable contribution to children's learning.

Commentary

51. Teaching and learning are good in this area of learning and, as a result, children achieve well and most are likely to reach the early learning goals by the age of five. In nursery and reception classes, children enjoy opportunities to experiment with paint, modelling and drawing. Paintings are bold and colourful. Children in the nursery work enthusiastically with the class assistant to learn the names and identify the sounds of a range of untuned instruments. They try to follow instructions as to when to play and when to stop, but find this very difficult because they are so keen to have a go. They are more successful at singing songs and rhymes loudly than softly, although knowledge of the words is not always secure.
52. A visiting pianist makes a valuable contribution to the learning of children in the reception class. They sing lustily and enthusiastically with lots of body actions, accompanied and unaccompanied. Singing is tuneful. They enjoy moving around the room to fast and slow music and begin to develop skills of changing movements relatively quickly.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching ensures all pupils' overall achievement is good in all aspects of the subject.
- Less able pupils and those with special educational needs do very well.
- Good leadership identifies necessary developments well.
- The proportion of pupils achieving results at the higher levels by Year 2 could be higher.

Commentary

53. The school has continued to improve standards since the last inspection. Overall, pupils achieve well because teaching is good across the school and because the subject is well led and managed. In particular, less able pupils and those with special educational needs are so well taught and supported that many of them attain standards similar to the other pupils. Pupils with English as an additional language are effectively supported so that they quickly play a full part in lessons and make good progress with other pupils.
54. Many children start school with language, literacy and communication skills that are at a very low level and there are significant differences between different year groups of pupils. As a result, standards in Year 2 have varied from year to year. Although they are achieving soundly, current pupils have average skills. This is similar to the standards shown in the 2003 national tests for pupils aged seven. Preliminary examination of the 2004 results suggest below average attainment, despite good progress in Years 1 and 2, because pupils' starting point was lower. Weaknesses in attainment lay in pupils' writing skills and in the small proportion of pupils reaching above average levels of attainment.
55. In Years 3 to 6, teachers build effectively on this foundation and progress is often rapid. There has been gradual improvement over time and certainly since the time of the previous inspection and standards of attainment are good. Teachers are very successful in bringing up the standards of less able pupils but are also effective in enabling other pupils to attain at the higher levels. The results of the 2003 National Curriculum tests indicate this. Despite a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs, the 2004 Year 6 pupils maintained the overall picture of above average performance.
56. Standards in speaking and listening are in line with expectations by Year 2 but are good by Year 6. Pupils talk with increasing confidence and ease through the school. Older pupils, in particular, enjoy talking to visitors about their work in various subjects and listen carefully to each other's comments. Teachers give pupils good opportunities to work in pairs and pupils make good use of these times. There is a confident choice of vocabulary in the written work of older pupils and much evidence of good quality writing. Spelling is reasonably accurate and handwriting is clear, legible and well formed. Pupils also write for a good range of purposes, although the development of ICT skills is rarely in evidence. Reading is well developed across the school. Reading at home is established from an early age, enabling parents to make a good contribution to their children's learning. There are many examples of pupils using their good reading skills to find out

information and undertake personal research using the Internet and books. No pupil, however, had the skills needed to find books in a library from their codes.

57. Teaching and learning are good overall, with many very good lessons leading to effective achievement. In the best lessons, activities are very well planned, meeting the needs of all groups of pupils well and delivered with pace, challenge and a dramatic style. Teachers have the ability to make even a rather dull topic come to life and sparkle. Pupils are very motivated, involved and behave very well as a result. These teachers have very good subject knowledge and communicate their enthusiasm extremely well, having a positive impact on learning. A very good lesson, delivered by the support teacher to pupils with language difficulties, was so well constructed and delivered through a "hot seating" session that pupils were enabled to converse and debate in some depth. The empathy they felt with the topic, foxhunting, was so vivid that it was still with them as they left the lesson. In other lessons, some very good opportunities to excite and interest pupils are missed. A good example is when pupils spend much time dissecting the punctuation of a poem and the wonderful imagery it portrays is ignored.
58. Leadership and management of the subject are good and are helping to improve provision and standards. The co-ordinator has a good knowledge of where strengths and weaknesses in the subject lie through regular monitoring. She acknowledges that, although the school is justifiably proud of its overall achievements, some attention needs to be given to addressing the lack of higher attaining pupils by the end of Year 2.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

59. Teachers plan a satisfactory range of activities to allow pupils to apply their developing language skills in other subjects. Good opportunities are planned for pupils to discuss their work in pairs and other small groups. In subjects such as mathematics, increasing attention to mental and oral work is extending pupils' ability to explain their thinking. There are some effective writing opportunities in subjects such as history and science. However, in many subjects, teachers make excessive use of worksheets that limit pupils' opportunities to extend their thinking by expressing their ideas. Few pupils have good independent skills at searching for information to support their learning in other subjects.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well through the school, reaching above average standards by Year 6.
- Good teaching makes very effective use of strong relationships to encourage pupils to learn well.
- Pupils' very good behaviour and attitudes play a significant role in their achievement.

Commentary

60. Pupils' achievement is good from their well below average attainment when they start school. They reach above average overall standards by the end of Year 6. The school has made good progress from the time of the last inspection in continuing to improve standards. The school's 2003 National Curriculum test results at this age were well above

average when compared nationally and with similar schools. Initial examination of the 2004 results suggests that they will be a little lower, reflecting the larger proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Value added data shows that pupils make strong progress, particularly in Years 3 to 6. Standards in Year 2 are below the national average, although they are well above those of similar schools. Current pupils are making good progress from lower standards when starting Year 1.

61. Teaching throughout the school is good, ensuring pupils' good achievement. All teachers have extremely good relationships with pupils and these ensure that pupils do well. This very positive ethos creates an effective atmosphere for learning and encourages very good attitudes and behaviour. Pupils want to work hard. Teachers are very positive and supportive of pupils, giving them confidence to do their best. The strong positive atmosphere and pupils' enthusiastic responses contribute significantly to good pace and learning in almost all lessons.
62. Teachers give very clear presentations and explanations, often making good use of resources, such as the interactive whiteboards, to ensure pupils understand. They plan their lessons well with good attention to their organisation and control to ensure that lessons go with good pace. Only occasionally, when teachers do not ensure the pace of lessons, minor inattention slows pupils' learning. In many lessons, teachers effectively promote quick responses in mental work by carefully pitching questions at the right levels for different pupils. This helps pupils to think hard and learn very well and links with the greater attention to problem solving that is being placed through the school. For example, pupils are being challenged to explain their mathematical thinking, leading to stronger learning.
63. Very good support for pupils with special educational needs ensures they play a full part in all lessons and make good progress. Pupils with English as an additional language are carefully supported to ensure that their learning is not hampered by their developing linguistic skills. Teaching assistants are well trained and very effective when working with groups or individual pupils. They make a strong contribution to pupils' learning. All staff know pupils' strengths and weaknesses well and make good use of informal assessment to question and challenge pupils at the right level to extend their thinking. Formal assessment systems are giving more useful information to help teachers to plan work for pupils with different abilities. Teachers share this information well and set overall targets for classes and groups to track progress. However, there is only limited use of this information to set individual targets for pupils to ensure they know what they need to do to improve.
64. The new co-ordinator leads the subject soundly and is increasing her knowledge and understanding through training and analyses of planning and pupils' books. A good plan is in place for monitoring the school's work, including observation of teaching, although this has not started. This restricts her ability to gain a clear picture of strengths and weaknesses through the school and limits the effectiveness of her recent action plan. However, good analysis of test questions has identified where new approaches to teaching and the curriculum can be introduced to raise standards further. In particular, action to improve pupils' problem-solving skills is having a positive impact.

Mathematics across the curriculum

65. Pupils make satisfactory use of their developing mathematical skills in other subjects. For example, in subjects such as design and technology, pupils measure accurately and use different scales. They use data handling skills in subjects such as geography and science, collecting data and using different forms of graphs to display their findings. Pupils also show confidence when using ICT to carry out mathematical tasks, such as spreadsheets.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching means that pupils achieve well through the school and reach above average standards of attainment.
- Very good relationships ensure an effective atmosphere for learning and pupils develop very good attitudes.
- Pupils enjoy science lessons and work hard because there is a good emphasis on practical activities and investigations.

Commentary

66. There has been good improvement in the school's provision for science since the last inspection. Standards in Year 6 have improved considerably and are being maintained despite recent changes in provision. Science is now taught by class teachers rather than by a specialist teacher. The 2003 Year 6 test results were only average nationally and well below those in similar schools. However, initial examination of the 2004 results indicate a return to above average attainment and good progress despite high proportions of pupils with special educational needs. The standards shown by the current Year 6 pupils maintain this improved position. Despite the well below average attainment of children entering the school, by Year 2, average proportions reach the higher Level 3 attainment and, overall, standards are average.
67. Teaching is good throughout the school, with strengths in teachers' organisation and management, and learning in most lessons proceeds with good pace. This is helping to improve standards. Teachers plan lessons well, making effective use of good resources. A strong emphasis on practical investigations helps pupils gain and correctly use scientific vocabulary and information. Teachers are particularly good at managing demonstrations and discussions, when pupils listen and observe very closely. They make sure that pupils learn and use the new scientific language associated with each topic. Pupils increasingly draw on earlier learning to ask their own questions and make suggestions about the subject matter. For example, Year 2 pupils classified different foods using correct terms and discussed how healthy they are. Year 6 pupils used a variety of experiences to talk about and refine their understanding of the nature of chemical changes.
68. Teachers' very good relationships with pupils ensure a positive ethos where good learning is encouraged. Pupils respond very well to this and behave very well, particularly in the older year groups. Pupils' very good attitudes ensure they pay good attention, try

hard and learn well. As a result, little time in lessons is wasted and teachers are able to keep the pace of learning going.

69. Teachers and assistants make good use of their informal knowledge of pupils to adapt activities and written work for the different abilities in their class. There is very good support for pupils with special educational needs that allows them to make very good progress. Pupils with English as an additional language are also supported well and care is taken to ensure they follow the language of the lessons. The good attention to developing scientific vocabulary helps them to make good progress with other pupils.
70. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has recently taken on the post and has already observed lessons to get a good indication of what is happening through the school. Resources have been audited and an action plan for future developments is in place. However, it is clear that further training and analysis will be needed to focus development securely at raising standards further.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There have been good improvements in resources, including a new computer suite.
- Effective procedures for assessment have been developed but insufficient use is made of the data to inform planning.
- There are no monitoring arrangements to enable the school to assess developments and focus on raising achievement.

Commentary

71. Pupils across the school reach standards in ICT that meet national expectations. The majority, including those with special educational needs and those from ethnic minority backgrounds, achieve satisfactorily against their prior attainment. By the end of Year 2, most pupils are familiar with basic computer operations, with higher attaining pupils showing good skills in using a range of programs with confidence.
72. Teaching is satisfactory and teachers are making increasingly effective use of the wide range of new resources that are extended and improving provision. Though the school, pupils develop familiarity and confidence with painting programs and select and use appropriate tools and icons. They use a sound range of word-processing skills to support their writing and presentations. In the satisfactory teaching seen during the week of inspection, teachers used sound demonstration of the skills to be practised by pupils and intervened positively to help them. However, as pupils had only used the suite once, much of the teaching and learning was focused on key skills of using the keyboard and simple exercises in word processing. In most lessons, pupils are enabled to draw on their previous learning and pauses are used effectively to provide guidance and refocus learning. In all lessons, pupils respond well, are motivated and collaborate well and this ensures satisfactory learning.
73. The subject is satisfactorily led. It is well planned and covers all strands appropriately. However, monitoring of standards in the subject is underdeveloped and this limits the

scope for teachers to set improvement targets and use them to inform their planning. Since the last inspection, improvements have been made in resources for the subject and staff confidence and expertise have been maintained through training. These measures support continuing development of the subject as teachers and pupils gain greater familiarity with the new systems. However, targets for development in the subject are not sufficiently focused on raising standards

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

74. Satisfactory use is made of ICT to promote learning in other subjects. It is particularly effective in history and geography where older pupils use the Internet with skill and understanding to search for information. The school is improving the application of ICT skills across the curriculum and opportunities for using ICT have been identified in long-term planning. However, this is not consistently so in teachers' short-term planning and limitations of resources have meant that actual use in the classroom has been limited, restricting pupils' skills development. Current use of the new ICT suite is giving teachers much greater opportunities and they are responding very well.

HUMANITIES

75. **Religious education** is subject to a separate inspection, carried out on the behalf of the diocese. Work was sampled in history and geography but too little evidence was available to support firm judgements of provision. The leadership and management of the subjects are satisfactory. Co-ordinators are knowledgeable, enthusiastic and keen to bring about improvements and have already had a positive impact on the curriculum and resources. However, their roles are limited because they have little chance to monitor across the school and get a good overview of teaching and learning. This makes it difficult for them to gauge exactly where standards lie and whether pupils are making enough progress.
76. In most classes, **history** was not a focus during the inspection week and only one lesson could be observed. In this lesson, taken by the co-ordinator, teaching and learning were very good and pupils achieved well. Past work and talking to pupils suggests that standards of attainment are average by Years 2 and 6, similar to those reported in the previous inspection. Pupils talk with enthusiasm and enjoyment of their experiences on school historical journeys and historical enquiry that they have undertaken. In particular, pupils in Year 6 are very knowledgeable about the Tudor period from their extended visit to a Tudor house and their role-play activities in costume that they made in school. The standard of written work, however, is variable. Teachers in Years 3 and 4, for example, provide purposeful and demanding tasks. However, in many classes the volume of recorded work is small and teachers rely too heavily on limiting worksheets. These demand too little of pupils and do not enable them to express their own views and ideas.
77. The position in **geography** is a similar one. Only two lessons could be seen, with good teaching and learning in each. Other evidence indicates that attainment is average by the end of Years 2 and 6. Good action has been taken to remedy the needless repetition of work that was found at the time of the previous inspection. Map work is a strength of the teaching and pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 recall in vivid detail maps that they have studied or compiled. Older pupils ably describe how to develop and use a key. Pupils confidently use the Internet to find information, for example when Year 5 pupils learned about money, food and dress in different countries in Europe. Again, however, some classes have only

limited recorded work. This means that it is difficult for the teacher to make an accurate assessment of pupils' individual progress over time and for reporting to parents.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

78. Few lessons could be seen during the inspection in these subjects. No lessons were seen in art and design, design and technology or physical education. Only two lessons were seen in music. As a result, inspectors sampled each subject through examination of school records, curriculum planning and pupils' past work where available. Discussions were held with co-ordinators. It is not possible to make firm judgements about provision, standards or teaching in these subjects. Co-ordinators' work is satisfactory and all have initial action plans to steer their coming work. However, there have been few opportunities for them to monitor teaching and learning, so their ability to contribute to development planning has been limited.
79. In **music**, provision is strengthened by the contribution of a music accompanist who works in close partnership with class teachers. In the teaching seen, pupils were given good opportunities to sing, with the majority of pupils responding very well and showing a great deal of enjoyment and spirituality in the process. Both class teachers and the accompanist worked well together. Pupils showed good skills in keeping the beat and in varying the patterns they clapped or play on instruments. Older pupils were challenged appropriately when they were asked to compose their own music with a focus on harmony. Singing heard in assembly was very good.
80. In **physical education**, all strands of the subject are covered and resources are developed to assist teachers with less confidence. Despite the urban setting, the school benefits from useful outside areas. Good links with outside experts contribute to the teaching, particularly of sports skills. A range of clubs, including a strong girls' football team, are provided after school and pupils have many opportunities to take part in inter-school competitions.
81. Pupils' work in **art and design** grows out of their work in other subjects. For example, Year 3 pupils make detailed and effective drawings and paintings of local buildings as a part of their topic about Bow. They extend this work to paintings in the style of L S Lowry, showing care and good control of paint. Year 6 pupils create flamboyant large-scale mythical monsters with associated creative writing. Past work shows that pupils develop painting skills confidently through the school, with increasing understanding of mixing and different forms of paint application for different effects. They use computer drawing and painting programs with increasing confidence to extend the range of their work.
82. There was little evidence in **design and technology** and no lessons were timetabled during the inspection. However, past work indicates that pupils gain knowledge and understanding of the design process, making drawings and identifying necessary tools and materials. The best of this work is closely linked with learning in other subjects, such as building of bridges in different styles after studying Tower Bridge.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

83. The school does not specifically timetable lessons on citizenship or personal, social and health education. However, these subjects are covered within other curriculum subjects and in particular within the "Here I Am" religious education programme. Personal, social

and emotional development is very well promoted in the nursery and reception classes. Very good relationships and care for pupils maintain this attention through the school and lead to pupils' extremely good attitudes and values. A good programme of personal, social and health education allows pupils to achieve well. Sex education is mainly taught through science and the school is careful to consult parents at regular intervals before specific topics are taught. The curriculum is effectively supplemented with further opportunities especially for older pupils involving special days focusing, for instance, on citizenship themes. The school has just introduced a school council to give older pupils responsibility for representing other pupils' views.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

| <i>Inspection judgement</i> | <i>Grade</i> |
|---|--------------|
| The overall effectiveness of the school | 3 |
| How inclusive the school is | 2 |
| How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection | 3 |
| Value for money provided by the school | 3 |
| Overall standards achieved | 3 |
| Pupils' achievement | 3 |
| Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos) | 2 |
| Attendance | 4 |
| 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 | 4 |
| How well the curriculum meets pupils needs | 3 |
| Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities | 2 |
| Accommodation and resources | 3 |
| Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety | 3 |
| Support, advice and guidance for pupils | 2 |
| How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views | 4 |
| The effectiveness of the school's links with parents | 3 |
| The quality of the school's links with the community | 3 |
| The school's links with other schools and colleges | 3 |
| The leadership and management of the school | 3 |
| The governance of the school | 4 |
| The leadership of the headteacher | 2 |
| The leadership of other key staff | 4 |
| 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).