

# INSPECTION REPORT

**St Aldhelm's C of E VA Combined School**

Poole. Dorset

LEA area: Poole

Unique reference number: 113830

Headteacher: Mrs Averil Bowyer

Lead inspector: Joyce Cox

Dates of inspection: 4<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> July 2005

Inspection number: 267722

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Combined  
School category: Voluntary aided  
Age range of pupils: 4 -12  
Gender of pupils: Mixed  
Number on roll: 457

School address: Winston Avenue  
Branksome  
Poole  
Dorset

Postcode: BH12 1PG  
Telephone number: 01202 715100  
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Appropriate authority: The governing body  
Name of chair of governors: Reverend Stephen Batty  
Date of previous inspection: 1 February 1999

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St Aldhelm's is a Church of England voluntary aided combined school situated to the east of Poole in Dorset. The school is much larger than other schools nationally. It caters for 457 pupils aged between four and twelve years in sixteen classes. Socio-economic circumstances are average with pupils coming from privately owned and rented homes. The number of pupils entitled to free schools meals is well below the national average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs, including those with statements, is below the national average. The majority of pupils with special educational needs have moderate learning difficulties. The levels of movement in and out of the school at times other than the normal points of admission and departure are below average overall with the most movement in Year 3 and Year 4. Nearly all pupils are from white, English-speaking families with a very small number of pupils who are at an early stage of learning English. The children's attainment on entry to the school varies from year to year but this year it is similar to that of other four-year-old children nationally.

The headteacher has completed eight years at the school and is retiring this July (2005). During the week of the inspection a temporary teacher taught one of the Year 7 classes.

The school has won several awards in recent years including a gold active mark for sport in 2003, a basic skills quality mark in 1999, 2001 and 2003, a healthy schools award in 2003, a school achievement award in 1999 and an FA charter award in 2004. Staff are currently engaged in working towards achieving a gold arts mark and another basic skills quality mark.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
25074	Joyce Cox	Lead inspector	Provision for children in the Foundation Stage Physical education Personal, social and health education and citizenship
31754	Charlotte Roberson	Lay inspector	
26945	Sylvia Gatehouse	Team inspector	Mathematics Music Special educational needs
24052	Trevor Taylor	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Design and technology
20009	David Cann	Team inspector	English Art and design History Geography English as an additional language
21090	David Manuel	Team inspector	French

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

The school provides a **satisfactory** quality of education and gives satisfactory value for money. Teaching is satisfactory overall and good in the reception classes and in English and mathematics lessons in Years 3 to 7. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall and they reach well above average standards in English, above average standards in physical education and music and average standards in all other subjects inspected by the time they leave the school. The school is competently led and managed.

#### The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- There is good provision for children in the Foundation Stage.
- Year 6 and 7 pupils reach well above average standards in English.
- Monitoring of pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory but is not yet rigorous enough to ensure consistent provision throughout the school.
- Year 2 pupils do not do well enough in writing.
- More able Year 2 pupils are not challenged sufficiently in mathematics lessons.
- Good support for pupils' personal development creates a positive ethos and results in pupils' good behaviour and attitudes to learning.
- There is a very good variety of sporting and musical activities to enrich the curriculum.

The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection. There are now schemes of work in all subjects and many improvements have been made to assessment systems and to the information and communication technology (ICT) resources. However, standards in national tests for Year 2 pupils have not kept pace with the national trend of improvement since the last inspection. Information provided for parents still does not contain all the required information.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

#### Year 6 results

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

*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*

Overall, pupils' achievement is **satisfactory**. Reception children achieve well. Many pupils in Years 3 to 7 achieve well in English and mathematics lessons but Year 1 and 2 pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory in English and more able Year 1 and 2 pupils could achieve more in mathematics. The work seen during the inspection indicates that:

- The majority of children in the reception classes are on course to attain the national standards (the early learning goals) in all areas of learning. Achievement is good.
- Year 2 pupils attain standards which are below average in English and mathematics and their achievement is unsatisfactory in English and unsatisfactory for the higher attaining pupils in mathematics. Their attainment is average in science and ICT and their achievement is satisfactory.

- By the end of Year 6 pupils attain well above average standards in English and average standards in mathematics, science and ICT. Their achievement is good in English and mathematics and music, very good in physical education and satisfactory in science.
- Standards attained by Year 7 pupils are above expectations in English and average in mathematics, science and ICT. Their achievement is good in English and mathematics and satisfactory in science and ICT.

Provision for pupils' social, moral and cultural development is good and for spiritual development it is satisfactory. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. Attendance is satisfactory and punctuality is good.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The school provides a **satisfactory** quality of education with some good features. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Teaching is particularly effective in the reception classes and in many English, mathematics, music and physical education lessons in Years 3 to 7. The school has thorough and comprehensive systems for assessing pupils' work but assessment information is not used effectively enough to set work for Year 1 and 2 pupils of different abilities. The curriculum is satisfactory with very good enrichment activities. The school takes good care of its pupils and there are good links with parents, the local community and other schools.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are **satisfactory**. The headteacher and other key staff run the day-to-day work of the school capably. The school's leadership is committed to improvement, but co-ordinators do not have sufficient opportunities to focus closely enough on raising all pupils' achievement. Governance is satisfactory. Many governors are new to their responsibilities. Their report to parents still does not contain all the statutory information.

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

Parents have positive views about the school. Some would like more information about their children's progress and some have concerns about behaviour. Pupils love their zone parks and sporting activities. They would like to be more involved in making decisions.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- establish consistent procedures for monitoring standards, achievement and the quality of education to ensure all pupils achieve their potential;
  - raise the attainment and achievement of Year 1 and 2 pupils in writing;
  - provide sufficiently challenging mathematics work for more able Year 1 and 2 pupils;
- and, to meet statutory requirements:
- ensure that the governors' report and the prospectus contain all the necessary information and that daily acts of worship comply with the statutory requirements.

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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

Pupils' achievement is **satisfactory**. It is good in the Foundation Stage and satisfactory overall in Years 3 to 7. Year 2 pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory in writing and in mathematics for the more able Year 2 pupils. By the end of Year 2 pupils attain **below average** standards in writing and mathematics and average standards in all other subjects inspected. At the end of Year 6 pupils attain **well above average** standards in English, above average standards in physical education and music and average standards in mathematics, science and ICT. Year 7 pupils attain **well above average** standards in English and average standards in mathematics, science and ICT.

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

- Standards are well above average in English at the end of Year 6 and Year 7.
- High quality specialist teaching in physical education and music accelerates pupils' attainment and achievement.
- Year 2 pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory in writing.
- Higher attaining Year 2 pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory in mathematics.

#### **Commentary**

##### **Foundation Stage**

1. From an average starting point, reception children do well and meet the expected standards for their age in all the areas of learning. Children's achievement is good because staff work effectively as a team. Reception staff know the children well and plan interesting and enticing activities which ensure children achieve well. Children find learning fun and interesting.

##### **Key Stage 1**

2. In Years 1 and 2 pupils' achievement is satisfactory in reading and they reach average standards. However, in mathematics higher attaining pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory and results have been below or well below average since 2000. Pupils' results in national tests improved in writing in 2004 when compared with the two previous years' results but declined this year in reading, writing and mathematics according to the unvalidated 2005 national test results. Year 2 pupils also do not do as well in tests as those in similar schools. Indeed, improvements in test results have been below the national trend since 2000. This is primarily because insufficient use is made of assessment information.
3. Year 2 pupils underachieve in writing because they have weak spelling and many do not use joined-up handwriting on a regular basis. Provisional 2005 national test results reveal that no pupil attained the higher Level 3, which corroborates inspection findings that higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged. Teaching does not make sufficient use of assessment to set the correct challenges for pupils in order to develop their skills. Test results indicate that boys perform less well than girls in Year 2 national tests but there was no significant difference in the attainment of the current pupils.
4. Year 2 science teacher assessments in 2004 showed that standards were well below the national average, but well above average at the higher Level 3. The assessments for 2005, yet to be validated, show improvement. Standards in Year 2 matched the national average, with attainment at the higher level remaining above average. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory in science.



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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	16.0 (15.5)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	14.7 (14.1)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	15.7 (15.8)	16.2 (16.3)

*There were 57 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

### **Key Stage 2 and Year 7**

5. In Years 6 and 7 standards in English are well above average. Test results at Year 6 have been above or well above average for the last five years. Year 3 to Year 7 pupils achieve well in all aspects of the subject as a result of effective and well-planned teaching and learning.
6. Pupils' achievement in Years 3 to 7 varies but is good overall in mathematics. Improvement in national test results has kept pace with the national trend over the past few years. The 2004 test results varied considerably between subjects with results in English improving dramatically on the 2003 results whilst those in mathematics declined from being above average to being below. This decline is partly due to long term staffing absences in Year 6 and also to the lack (until this year) of a permanent mathematics subject leader to lead and monitor the subject effectively to ensure all pupils achieve their potential. However, this is not the full story: inspectors found that, whilst pupils achieve well in many mathematics lessons, overall the picture varied between classes and year groups with Year 6 and 7 pupils achieving particularly well as they are placed in groups according to their ability and work is skilfully matched to their particular needs. This arrangement is having a good impact on raising standards as illustrated in the unvalidated 2005 national tests which show a good improvement on the 2004 results and suggest that standards in mathematics are rising once again.
7. The results of national tests in science for 2004 showed standards to be below the national average at Year 6 at both the expected and higher levels and below average when compared with similar schools. The results for 2005 show an improvement and standards match the national average at both levels. The performance of boys in the tests compared with the national picture is significantly higher than that of girls but the inspection found no significant differences in attainment. At the end of Year 7, when pupils leave school, their attainment in science is similar to that expected for their age. The main barrier to raising standards further in science is the fact that pupils' progress and attainment are not analysed with sufficient rigour throughout the year.
8. Year 3 to 7 pupils' achievement is consistently good or better in physical education and music lessons because the two co-ordinators and other specialist teachers teach the majority of the sports and music lessons.
9. Standards have been maintained in ICT when considering the increased curriculum demands in the last six years. Year 1 and 2 pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations. Pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations at the end of Year 6 and Year 7. Pupils' achievement is now satisfactory in all year groups and in every class. There have been considerable improvements to the ICT provision since the last inspection and these improvements have started to have a good impact on the pupils'

achievement. Standards in all other subjects inspected at the end of Year 6 and Year 7 are average and in physical education and music they are above average.

- Pupils with special educational needs reach standards in their work commensurate with their ability because the overall quality of support they receive is satisfactory. The very few pupils whose home language is not English make satisfactory progress in both English language and other areas of the curriculum.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	29.0. (27.5)	26.9. (26.8)
Mathematics	26.1 (28.6)	27.0 (26.8)
Science	28.2 (29.0)	28.6 (28.6)

*There were 53 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

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

Pupils' attitudes to school are **good**, as is their behaviour. Their social, moral and cultural development is **good** and their spiritual development is **satisfactory**. Attendance is **satisfactory** and punctuality **good**.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Boys and girls get along well together, behave well and enjoy school.
- Older pupils have especially positive attitudes and appreciate the wide range of activities provided for them.
- Pupils have a good and growing understanding of moral issues.
- Opportunities for spiritual development are not planned for specifically and provision in this area is currently not better than satisfactory.

**Commentary**

- Pupils are generally happy in school and say they like their teachers because they are friendly and treat them fairly. Relationships are good overall and older pupils help with younger ones for example when they sit with them while they eat their sandwiches together or while they help organise and look after them during sports day. Behaviour is good across the school with only isolated instances of misbehaviour. There have been no recent exclusions. In many lessons pupils are very keen to get started with their work. They respond politely to each other and to their teachers and co-operate kindly with each other throughout the day. Pupils say bullying is rare but is always dealt with quickly.
- Pupils are keen and enthusiastic when they take part in extra-curricular sports activities after school. They enjoy their school visits and those in Year 7 spoke very favourably of their recent skiing trip. They love their ‘Zone Parc’ sporting activities at lunchtime where pupils of all ages play well together in clearly designated areas. Pupils respond confidently and with increasing maturity. For instance, some Year 5 girls spoke very sensibly about why and how they raised money for victims of the Tsunami. When given the opportunity they love being in charge and Year 7 pupils undertake extra responsibilities such as being ‘Zone Parc’ monitors with pride.

13. The school displays are of a high quality and promote many aspects of social and moral development effectively. Local and global news stories are imaginatively displayed every two weeks which keeps pupils very aware of the world around them. Pupils have also a growing awareness of moral issues and debate and discuss events within lessons and informally when asked. Pupils of all ages have a good understanding of what is right and wrong. They understand the importance of festivals and traditions in other religions and faiths well.
14. The words ‘caring to learn and learning to care’ are displayed around the school and pupils often think of others and over the year raise considerable sums of money for charitable causes including shoe boxes of toys at Christmas for less fortunate children. Opportunities are given to reflect quietly and pupils respond well during class assemblies and when they sing a range of songs together in the hall. However, spiritual development is currently not actively planned for consistently across the whole school or within lesson plans. An audit of provision is underway with ongoing training being planned to further develop acts of worship in the school. During the inspection the school did not comply with the requirement to hold a daily act of worship as no prayer or moment of reflection took place during the two hymn practices.
15. Attendance is satisfactory overall with many pupils having very good rates of attendance. Slightly higher than average levels of unauthorised absences last year have been reduced this school year to a more acceptable level of 0.3 per cent. Office staff have a good understanding of their role in promoting and recording attendance and they also encourage punctuality, which is generally good.

**Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 2003-4 – 94.8%**

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	4.7	School data:	0.5
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.*

**QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

The school provides a **satisfactory** quality of education. Teaching and learning are both **satisfactory**. There is a good curriculum in the Foundation Stage and the curriculum in Years 1 to 7 is **satisfactory**. There are a **good** number of extra-curricular activities. The school takes **good** care of its pupils and has **good** links with parents, the local community and other schools.

**Teaching and learning**

The quality of teaching and learning is **satisfactory** overall. It is good in reception and in Years 1 to 7 it is satisfactory, with good teaching frequently seen in Years 5, 6 and 7. Assessment is **satisfactory**. The use of assessment is also satisfactory overall, although there are some weaknesses.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is good in the reception classes where children’s learning is made exciting.
- High quality specialist teaching in physical education and music raises pupils’ attainment and achievement.

- Teachers' good relationships and high expectations of pupils' behaviour lead to calm atmospheres for learning.
- Assessment information is not used consistently enough in ICT or to provide challenging work for higher attaining Year 2 pupils in mathematics.
- Teachers' marking does not always tell pupils what they do well and what they need to do to improve.

## Commentary

16. Teaching is good in the reception classes and the children achieve well and learn effectively because learning is made interesting and exciting and they have many opportunities to choose their own activities and collect their necessary resources. The teachers and the support staff work together well, have good assessment procedures and succeed in providing a stimulating and exciting learning environment for the children.
17. Overall teaching is satisfactory. However, a significant number of lessons have undoubted strengths in planning and organisation and are leading to good and at times very good learning. This is particularly true in English, mathematics, music and physical education lessons in Years 5, 6 and 7. However, this picture is not consistent across all subjects and classes and this restricts pupils' overall achievement.
18. Teachers have established good relationships throughout the school that ensure that pupils have good attitudes to learning. When given challenging tasks, pupils enjoy their work, apply themselves confidently to tasks, persevere and achieve well. Teachers effectively back up this purposeful ethos with clear behaviour management strategies that ensure that pupils are fully aware of the standards of behaviour that are expected. These factors ensure that most lessons can proceed with pace. However, in some lessons in Years 1 and 2, teachers spend too much time introducing activities and keep younger pupils sitting on the floor for too long so that pupils become bored and restless and lose concentration. In addition work provided for the more able Year 2 pupils is not sufficiently challenging which restricts their achievement in English and mathematics.
19. Pupils' achievement is considerably enhanced by the fact that the school has two physical education specialists and two music specialists whose considerable expertise and skills are put to very good effect in Years 3 to 7. The work and learning are challenging but presented in a very lively and enthusiastic manner by the teachers, who also uses praise and humour to very good effect.
20. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall. Teachers' planning for pupils with special educational needs does not always take into account the targets in pupils' individual educational plans. Teaching assistants have access to pupils' individual education plans but the targets are not consistently pursued when pupils are engaged in group work with support staff. In Years 6 and 7, pupils with special educational needs are taught very well and supported effectively in class.
21. Teaching and learning are satisfactory for pupils who speak English as an additional language as they receive a sound level of support from specialist teachers and support staff. In small group sessions pupils are given much individual help to extend their vocabulary and develop their understanding. In class, however, there is not always enough attention is paid to ensuring that pupils have fully understood new words and concepts introduced in lessons.
22. The assessment co-ordinator has devised secure and thorough procedures for assessment and record keeping. Pupils are assessed frequently, particularly in English and mathematics. Numerous assessments are made through observations in lessons and half termly formal assessments and tests. Assessments are recorded in detail and pupils' progress can be clearly followed. However, the way assessment information is used varies considerably between

subjects and year groups. The best use is made in English and mathematics in Years 6 and 7 to group pupils according to their ability, which allows teachers to match work precisely to pupils' various learning needs. However, limited use is made of assessment information to plan pupils' mathematics learning in Year 2, which results in different groups of pupils not always making the progress of which they are capable.

23. The way pupils' attainment and achievement are assessed in ICT lacks cohesion between classes and year groups. In addition the way in which teachers mark pupils' work requires improvement as not all teachers make it clear to pupils what they do well or what they have to do to improve their work.

**Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 44 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	5 (11%)	17(39%)	19 (43 %)	3 (7%)	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.*

**The curriculum**

The school's provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **good** and for pupils in Years 1 to 7 it is **satisfactory**. The school provides a **very good** range of extra-curricular activities. Resources and accommodation are **good**.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils benefit from very good strategies to enrich the curriculum.
- Good provision for personal, social and health education and citizenship successfully extends pupils' personal development.
- It is difficult for pupils with physical disabilities to get to the ICT suite.

**Commentary.**

24. The provision in the Foundation Stage is of a good standard. The good curriculum in Foundation Stage enables children to achieve well in all areas of learning. The good accommodation includes access to a well-resourced and secure outdoor area. There is a high focus on helping the children to reach good standards in their personal, social and emotional development and this positively impacts on achievement throughout the school.

25. The school fulfils the statutory requirements by teaching all National Curriculum subjects including religious education. French is taught in Years 6 and 7. In Years 1 to 7 the provision for the curriculum found at the last inspection has been improved due to the fact that there are now policies for all subjects. There remains a satisfactory emphasis on the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and science. Curriculum schemes are used as working documents to guide subject planning and ensure the steady development of knowledge and skills. The school has yet fully to embrace the principle embedded in the Primary Strategy 'Excellence and Enjoyment' of considering how they would like to develop and extend the curriculum for all pupils.

26. Planning for personal, social and health education is good. Pupils' skills are promoted well through a combination of dedicated curriculum time and the use of such subjects as art and design and ICT to produce effective anti-smoking and anti-racial posters.

27. The curriculum is enhanced by very good provision for extra-curricular activities that are enthusiastically supported by pupils across the school. Pupils benefit from a good range

of educational visits that are carefully selected to extend and improve their education. The range of residential visits includes a skiing trip in Year 7 which successfully develops pupils' social and academic skills and helps to promote confidence and self-esteem. The expertise of various peripatetic musicians gives the pupils an opportunity to learn to play a wide range of musical instruments. Similarly the expertise of sports coaches and foreign language teachers provides a wealth of skills to enhance pupils' learning.

28. The school is well staffed in terms of the number of teachers, but use and involvement of teaching assistants vary depending on how closely they plan and work alongside teachers. When fully aware of the learning objectives they are more confident and fully involved in offering support to pupils. Accommodation and resources are good overall. There are strengths in the quality of the outdoor facilities for children in the Foundation Stage which, although small, is appropriate and used well to enhance children's physical development. There are very good outside facilities which have been improved by the zoning of the large play area to allow a wide variety of activities to be undertaken by the pupils, for example the caged area for ball games and another where pupils can play a variety of board games. The problem of access to the ICT suite is recognised by the school and it is planning to take action to ensure that any pupils with physical disabilities will be able to gain access.

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

Provision for welfare and care, including for health and safety, is good. Satisfactory guidance and advice are given to pupils. There are satisfactory arrangements for seeking and acting on the views of pupils.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Induction arrangements into the school are good.
- Policies and procedures guide good practice for care and welfare.
- Not all pupils have targets to guide and support their academic and personal progress.
- Those in the school council are keen to see it take a more active part in the life of the school.

### **Commentary**

29. Parents are pleased with arrangements for getting to know the school and are right to think that induction is well organised and managed. This enables pupils to settle well and make progress. Home visits are offered to every family and taken up by the vast majority in September. Information is shared effectively with pre-school playgroups. Further up the school new pupils are given a 'buddy' to enable them too to feel comfortable and welcomed. Some pupils who had started in the junior department told inspectors they found the school friendly and settled in happily. Overall induction is good because it is flexible enough to meet the needs of a wide range of children.
30. Governors take on their responsibilities well in ensuring that the school buildings and site are maintained to a very high standard. The experienced site manager also effectively oversees ongoing improvements, including security. Standards of cleanliness are very good. Provision for disabled access is being reviewed and many adaptations both inside and out have already been made. The school chooses to adopt many county policies, which guide pupil welfare. Training needs are well met, including those for child protection and first aid. Links with outside agencies such as the behaviour

support service and with other professionals such as the school nurse are well established and advice appropriately sought for many pupils over the year. Office staff deal sensitively with pupils who have minor accidents during the day and record properly what happens and what they do about it. Overall there are many good features in the provision for care and welfare which look to be further strengthened with the recent appointment of a pastoral care worker.

31. Informally and formally staff regularly share information including for those with special concerns. Pupil profiles are more a collection of work samples and test assessments and do not specifically include aspects of their personal and social development, but reports to parents give some information in this area. Those pupils with special educational needs have appropriate education plans to address a range of needs and these are being used satisfactorily to promote skills and learning. Achievements are rewarded and recognised during assembly celebrations. However, not all teachers set and assess individual pupil targets.
32. The school has identified the development of the school council as an area that needs more time and attention. Councillors regret that they have only met together four times since September, that they have no display notice board, nor badges which could demonstrate their importance. They want their friends to start using the suggestion boxes in each classroom which have been empty for weeks. It is good that structures are in place for a council but currently pupils are waiting for a greater opportunity to get involved in planning for changes and improvements in their school.

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

There are good links and partnerships with parents, with other schools, with community groups and with the church.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents think staff are very friendly and this helps their children enjoy school.
- Parents provide good, practical support and help in a variety of ways.
- Community links are well established, including those with the church.

### **Commentary**

33. Parents have positive views of the school and like the way their children settle into school routines and say that they find staff accessible and approachable. They think their children do well especially by the time they are at the end of Year 7. They love the provision for sport and they appreciate the very good quality of accommodation and spacious grounds. Complaints are very rare. Some parents would like to be consulted more and some would like a better range of written information. Both these areas have been identified for development by the school in its self-evaluation.
34. A significant number of parents get involved every week when they help in classrooms and this voluntary support is welcomed and appreciated. They help on visits when asked. They help practically in the library. Some help supervise the daily 'walking bus'. Parents enthusiastically put themselves forward as parent governors and elections are held. The Parent Teacher Association works very hard and is fully committed to raising funds for the school. For example, it holds the Summer Fayre within the community which is very well supported.
35. Parents receive newsletters which explain what is going on in the school. Although some parents said they feel information is often late, advance warning is given which

helps parents plan. The school website is nearing completion which will provide a useful source of information. However, these relative strengths are balanced by some weaknesses in two important aspects of information. Pupils' annual reports give limited information in some subjects about progress during the year and very little on what pupils need to do to improve. The annual report from governors and the prospectus also still omit some statutory information

36. There is a good range of links and friendships within the community. Businesses donate generously over the year and, for example, matched the recent funds raised by Year 5 when they held their Tsunami concert. Sports kit and new computer monitors have also been donated. Sports clubs use the grounds weekly. Church links are well established and the vicar is a familiar face in the school. Church members listen to pupils read regularly and the vicar leads an assembly each week and is supportive to staff.
37. Pupils and staff benefit from good and developing links with other schools in the area. Pupils regularly compete in sports events and enjoy participating in music festivals in Poole with their friends. Links with playgroups are good because information is shared well. Year 7 staff share training and communicate closely with the pupils' next schools, which ensures a smooth transition to Year 8. Past pupils often return for work experience placements and social events. These links are all positive features.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Overall the leadership and management are **satisfactory**. The leadership of the headteacher is **satisfactory**. The management of the school is **satisfactory**. The governance of the school is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are good.
- The monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning are not sufficiently thorough.
- The school's budget is well managed by the finance officer.
- There are still omissions in the school's documentation as there were at the time of the last inspection.

### **Commentary**

38. The headteacher, assisted by the deputy headteacher and the strategic management team, competently leads the school with a clear emphasis on the Christian values that underpin all the school does. The Foundation Stage is led and managed well, providing a rock-solid basis for the rest of the school. The school is a calm, well-ordered community. Good relationships between staff and pupils were frequently noted during the inspection. There is an ethos of tolerance and courtesy, and a clear expectation that pupils behave well and show respect for one another. These aspects reflect the school's stated aims in its prospectus, its commitment to equal opportunities for all and the overall quality of the leadership at its best.
39. However, although there are procedures in place for the monitoring of teaching and learning, in practice these are not always robust enough, with the result that there is considerable variation in the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school. Co-ordinators are released for half a day each term to monitor their subjects, but not all use the time to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning because of other over-riding tasks such as reviewing policies, schemes of work and organising resources. However,



the school's budget clearly shows that more provision of time for monitoring could easily be provided. Where monitoring has been conducted well and resources directed according to the outcomes, there has been a positive impact on standards attained by pupils, especially in English in Years 5, 6 and 7. There is a satisfactory, up-to-date management plan that outlines the school's priorities for development. These are based on an analysis of performance but cost implications are not always clearly identified in all areas which makes monitoring more difficult.

40. The management of the school's financial affairs is good. There are clear lines of responsibility and the finance officer provides an efficient link between the school and the governing body. Recommendations from the most recent auditor's report have been effectively completed. The school's budget is managed with caution and the governors are well aware of the principles of best value. The carry forward is earmarked for justifiably major expenditure in the year ahead, including staffing and premises costs, as well as sums set aside to support curriculum innovation such as ICT. The governors plan to carry forward no more than 5 per cent.

### Financial information

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

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	1,048,785	Balance from previous year	135,956
Total expenditure	1,068,408	Balance carried forward to the next	116,334 <sup>1</sup>
Expenditure per pupil	2,358		

41. The governors of the school are enthusiastic and committed, although many are very new to their role and some are still getting to grips with their responsibilities such as monitoring, challenging and holding the school to account. They are supportive and visit the school on a rolling programme to look at their particular subject areas and they are beginning to develop closer links with the school staff through informal events. Governors still omit to publish national assessment data in their annual report to parents and in the prospectus so it is difficult for parents to compare the school's results with those of other pupils nationally.
42. The main aids to improving standards are the school's positive ethos and Christian qualities, and its service to the community through music and sport. The main barriers to improvement are the lack of consistent, thorough and frank monitoring of teaching and learning by subject co-ordinators and members of the strategic management team and the use of the outcomes this would reveal.

<sup>1</sup> The carry forward figure is earmarked to cover staffing costs as a result of declining number of pupils joining the school due to decline in the birth rate across Poole. In addition the school has experienced continuing problems with leaking roofs which have resulted in considerable expenditure despite support from the Diocese.

## **PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES**

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

The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **good**.

Children's attainment is average when compared with other four year olds when they start in the reception classes. Their attainment is below the expected levels when they start in some aspects of their personal, social and emotional development as they find sharing, taking turns and listening quite difficult. All children achieve well in all the areas of learning because the teaching is good and the curriculum is planned effectively to provide a wide range of interesting and relevant activities, which are well matched to their needs. The Foundation Stage leader provides good leadership and management. There is a good ratio of adults to children, which means that the needs of all children can be met. Several parents help regularly in the reception classes and are valued and respected members of the team. Major strengths in the provision are the way in which the teachers, support staff and parents work as a highly effective team and in the detailed record keeping and assessments. In addition the children have regular, continuous access to a separate secure outdoor area containing exciting resources and activities. There are good links with the playgroups and nurseries which the children attend before starting school. One of these is run by the Early Years governor who provides invaluable support to the reception classes. Children are prepared well for transfer to Year 1.

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

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

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

- Children achieve well and are self-confident because of the good organisation and well-established class routines.
- Good relationships are evident which make the children feel secure and cared for.

#### **Commentary**

43. Children demonstrate that during their year in reception they have acquired good self-esteem and confidence. They know the class routines well, settle to tasks with a minimum of fuss and behave sensibly. Children and staff clearly enjoy each other's company and the positive ethos supports all children. Staff are infinitely patient and constantly encourage and support children to try new experiences. As a result children learn to become independent and happily and confidently select their own activities and resources. They learn to conform to the staff's high expectations as there are weekly class targets for them to achieve, for example remembering to put their hands up to answer questions. Good teaching is leading to good achievement in emotional development, independence and behaviour. Because staff are skilled in knowing how young children learn effectively, they plan a good range of activities which lead to sustained interest and concentration from the children and a strong desire to learn. Children achieve well in this area of learning and the majority are on course to reach the early learning goals by the end of the year.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers plan and organise activities well so that children can practise and develop a full range of skills.
- Adults' skilled interactions with the children ensure that they learn to use language with increasing expertise to tell, explain and describe.
- On some occasions less able children are not challenged sufficiently.

### **Commentary**

44. Teachers and other adults provide many good opportunities for the development of children's speaking and listening skills. They engage in conversations, question children about their work and show interest in their responses. As a result, the majority of children are articulate and readily chat or listen to each other. Every opportunity is seized upon to encourage children to communicate and use language; for instance, when children are making jam sandwiches they are encouraged to read the instructions and to retell them in the correct order. Children enjoy stories and follow the teachers' pointing as they read stories. Higher attaining children can read simple texts and all children share their books regularly with their parents at home. They appreciate the humour and the events in stories such as 'The Lighthouse Keeper's Lunch' and are eager to predict what might happen next. The more able children are beginning to write sentences for themselves. On occasions the less able children are just asked to draw a picture rather than attempt to write or copy single words as well which restricts their achievement in learning to write. Most children make a reasonable attempt at writing their own names and they enjoy writing 'party invitations' or 'messages' to each other in the writing areas. Because of good teaching and support the children make good progress, achieve well and are on course to reach the early learning goals by the end of the year.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers plan a wide range of activities to support learning which ensures children achieve well.

### **Commentary**

45. Teaching, learning and achievement are good and the majority of children are likely to meet the expected levels by the end of the school year. All children can count to at least ten and more able children can count to 100 using a number square. An analysis of children's work shows that all they make good progress, with the most able demonstrating that they have learned to understand and perform simple addition and subtraction. In an introductory mathematical session girls in particular showed that they had learned to recognise a number such as seven and can say that twelve is more than seven. Boys found this activity quite difficult. Children are given good opportunities to match, count, sort and measure using a variety of attractive resources. They learn to estimate the length of various objects before measuring carefully using their hands and feet. Weekly class mathematical targets effectively promote children's learning, for instance 'learning to name and talk about 3D shapes'. Number rhymes and songs are used well to encourage children's counting skills.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Staff plan a good range of interesting activities to stimulate children's curiosity and enhance their understanding.
- Children's computer skills are developing well.

### **Commentary**

46. The quality of teaching and learning in this area is good and children are on course to meet the early learning goals by the end of this year. Activities linked to topics such as the current one about the sea develop children's understanding and enable them to achieve well. Attractive and enticing role-play areas such as the 'Sea Life Centre' and the 'Diving Centre' encourage children to learn new vocabulary and to try new experiences such as wearing flippers for the first time. Children enjoy a good variety of visits to learn about the world around them. They recently visited Hengistbury Head where they used all their senses to look for minibeasts and to collect natural materials which they made into very attractive palettes.
47. The children benefit from and thoroughly enjoy lessons in the computer suite where it is evident that all are developing good computer skills. For instance, they showed that they had learned to use the 'Dazzle' art program successfully to design and produce very colourful pictures of the 'The Lighthouse Keeper's Lunch.' Children worked together very well, helping each other, taking turns and controlling the mouse effectively. There is a very good interaction between adults and children with lots of encouragement and praise, which motivate and encourage the children to persevere and do well. The school makes good provision for the teaching of religious education in the reception classes. For instance, after listening to the story of the 'Rainbow Fish' sharing its fins, children thought about all the things they share in school.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in physical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is continuous access to a secure outdoor area which is used all day for a good variety of activities.
- Staff make good use of the good indoor and outdoor facilities.

### **Commentary**

48. Children achieve well in this area and by the end of the reception year the vast majority are expected to meet the national expectations. Children enjoy physical activities and eagerly change into the correct clothing unaided. They show that they have learned to work as part of a team when they practise for Sports Day in the hall. The majority listen carefully to the teachers' clear instructions and move sensibly when participating in egg and spoon and tunnel races. Teaching and learning are good because lessons are well planned and teachers use clear explanations which the children understand and ensure their safety at all times. Activities are interesting, which encourages children to use their bodies effectively. For instance, the majority have learned to skip using high knee movements which they demonstrate in effective warm up sessions. They watch the

performance of others patiently and use this as a model to improve their own movements. Children have daily access to a safe outdoor area where they enjoy a variety of interesting activities and have learned to control wheeled toys competently. In class, they are becoming increasingly more dextrous in using small apparatus such as interlocking counting cubes and scissors.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

49. It is not possible to make an overall judgement on provision or teaching as no lessons were observed in this area. However, from planning and the very attractive work on display it is evident that children's creative development is planned for effectively and children have ample opportunities for painting and experimenting with a range of modelling materials. For instance they have created colourful pictures of lighthouses using the art program 'Dazzle' very effectively. In addition the carefully designed and constructed role play areas provide good opportunities for children to use their imagination and act out situations related to their seaside topic. Children enjoy singing and sing happily and tunefully with a good sense of rhythm.

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

### **ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE**

#### **English**

Provision in English is **good**.

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

- Pupils' achievement is good in Years 6 and 7 and standards are well above average.
- Pupils underachieve in writing in Year 2 where standards are below average.
- Teaching and learning are good in Years 3 to 7 where lessons stimulate pupils' speaking skills well.
- The teaching of handwriting is not well managed in Years 1 and 2 which hinders pupils' progress.

#### **Commentary**

50. Pupils achieve well in Years 6 and 7 and standards are higher than they were at the last inspection. Current Year 6 and Year 7 pupils are attaining well above average standards, their achievement is good and they have made good progress since Year 2. Test results at Year 6 have been above or well above average in all of the last five years. Year 3 to Year 7 pupils achieve well in all aspects of the subject as a result of effective and well-planned teaching and learning.

51. Year 2 pupils attain standards in writing that are below average and many pupils are underachieving. Test results in writing have been below average in two of the last five years and are lower than they were at the last inspection. Teaching does not make enough use of assessment to set the right challenges for pupils and develop their skills properly. In reading and speaking and listening pupils attain levels in line with expectations and achieve satisfactorily.

52. Test results indicate that boys perform slightly less well than girls at Year 2 but there was no significant difference in the attainment of the current pupils. Teachers successfully promote boys' reading by ensuring that subject matter appeals to them

and, whenever possible, they include role-play and dialogue in class and group activities. Pupils with special educational needs are given satisfactory support and their achievement is similar to that of their peers. The few pupils whose home language is not English are fully included in class activities and receive individual support which ensures satisfactory achievement. More able pupils are well identified in Years 3 to 7 and regularly given more demanding assignments which mean they achieve well. However, teachers do not always assess the levels of more able pupils in Years 1 and 2 to ensure that they are sufficiently challenged.

53. Teachers give pupils good opportunities to listen and speak and standards in speaking and listening are satisfactory by Year 2 and above expectations by Years 6 and 7. Drama and role-play are used effectively to promote pupils' communication skills and they are confident about addressing the class to explain their thoughts. Teachers in all classes set many joint activities in English, music and humanities which encourage pupils to discuss ideas and methods and learn to work together effectively.
54. Standards in reading are above average at the end of Year 6 and Year 7. Pupils' achievement is good. This is because pupils are given many opportunities to read in groups and individually. They develop fluency and confidence and read with good levels of expression. Pupils make good use of the library and whether under direct supervision or not they take a mature approach to selecting books they like. Pupils develop a good grasp of how to use books for research. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are interested in reading and take their books home regularly. Comments from parents suggest that there is a satisfactory level of support at home for most pupils. More able readers are not always challenged by the books they have and monitoring of their progress is not sufficiently rigorous.
55. Pupils' attainment in writing is above average by Years 6 and 7. Teachers give pupils many opportunities to write at length in a wide range of different styles in English and in geography and history. Pupils redraft their work effectively and make effective use of ICT to present their work in different formats. By Year 2 pupils do not have a firm enough grasp of how to write a clear sentence and spelling standards are below average. Many do not use joined-up handwriting on a regular basis which reduces the standard of their work.
56. Teaching and learning are good overall but the quality varies between classes. Lessons are well managed and pupils develop positive attitudes to learning throughout the school. Teachers have good subject knowledge but planning in Years 1 and 2 does not always define the exact skills which teachers want pupils to acquire in their work. Learning objectives are clearly established and shared in Years 3 to 7. Assessment is variable. It is good for older pupils but, for pupils in Years 1 and 2, there is insufficient attention to measuring how pupils are acquiring skills. Hence expectations are not always high enough for pupils and teachers do not set precise targets to help them improve their work.
57. Leadership and management in English are satisfactory which have led to significant improvements in Years 3 to 7 since the previous inspection. The subject leader has not had enough time to observe lessons and influence the teaching in Years 1 and 2. Although there has been monitoring of infant pupils' books and planning, this has not provided teachers with the guidance that they recognise they need to raise standards.

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

58. Provision for the development of language and literacy skills is good in history and geography in Years 3-7. Pupils undertake good research from books and ICT resources and write lengthy accounts in a range of styles. While pupils in Years 1 and 2 use their literacy skills satisfactorily, they are not always encouraged to reinforce basic skills such as handwriting and spelling. Speaking skills are well developed through collaborative activities in all classes in subjects such as science, drama and music.

## French

59. French could only be sampled as it was possible to observe only one lesson in Year 6. No overall judgment may be made on provision, teaching or standards. Further evidence was gathered from samples of pupils' completed work and discussions with selected pupils. Evidence indicates that pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall.

60. French is taught in Years 6 and 7 and follows the units of learning in a published scheme of work. Year 6 pupils make satisfactory progress in their early language skills, learning about numbers, days of the week and months of the year. This knowledge is systematically extended over time to involve new vocabulary and invite responses from pupils about themselves. Pupils understand and use a range of simple phrases and adapt them to communicate to their teacher and to one another. They respond thoughtfully to questions and talk about where they live and their families, using satisfactory pronunciation and accent. They write simple words and phrases, reinforcing their knowledge and understanding. In the one lesson observed, teaching, learning and standards were satisfactory.

61. Year 7 pupils have only been learning French during this academic year due to changes in staff. Evidence indicates that the subject meets the statutory requirements for this year group. Pupils' learning has built on early language skills and has been accelerated over the year to extend pupils' skills and vocabulary successfully. Pupils have good attitudes to learning a modern foreign language and in discussion some pupils expressed a desire to learn more languages when they transfer to their secondary school. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when it was judged that many pupils were reluctant to attempt French speech. Pupils also learn about some of the customs and traditions of French people through links with school life, geographical features and famous artists.

62. The co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership and management. Strengths include adjusting the units of learning to meet the range of pupils' needs and developing pupils' enthusiasm to learn a foreign language. She has also identified relevant needs and priorities for further development of the subject.

## MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Highly attaining Year 2 pupils are not achieving well enough.
- There has been significant disruption in the leadership of the subject which has affected pupils' overall achievement.
- Pupils with special educational needs do not receive enough support in Years 1 and 2.
- The majority of pupils like mathematics, behave well and have positive attitudes.
- The setting of pupils by ability in Years 6 and 7 has a good effect on progress.

## Commentary

63. Standards attained by Year 2 and Year 6 pupils in 2004 were well below average compared with all schools nationally. In 2005 there has been some improvement in the numbers of pupils reaching the expected Levels 2 and 4, but not enough pupils reach the higher Levels 3 and 5. Standards attained by Year 2 pupils are now below the national average, while those attained by Year 6 pupils are in line with all schools nationally.
64. The school looked hard to see why standards in Year 2 slipped so low in 2002 but action taken then to make improvements was not monitored thoroughly enough. Consequently, pupils' attainment did not rise fast enough and even now remains below average. The more able pupils are not attaining the higher Level 3. Similarly, the school investigated the very severe dip in Year 6 in 2004 and took remedial action. This has had more positive results during the past year and the school is back on course although too few pupils reach the higher Level 5.
65. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory after a long period of intermittent, stopgap arrangements that prevented consistent monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning. The new co-ordinator has recently conducted joint observations of teaching and undertaken an analysis of pupils' work through a book scrutiny. However, these lack precision in some areas. Issues identified from these activities, such as raising teachers' expectations and setting work to match pupils' abilities more closely, have yet to be pursued tenaciously enough to affect standards. Furthermore, close monitoring of the provision for pupils with special educational needs, or for those of higher ability, has not been undertaken thoroughly enough.
66. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 7. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall in the infant classes but the attainment of the more able Year 2 pupils is unsatisfactory. Pupils' achievement is good in Years 3 to 7. There are very good features in the teaching of older pupils, including good planning, clear learning intentions, a strong sense of purpose in lessons with good pace, high expectations and good support for pupils with special educational needs. Lessons are interesting and teachers use time very efficiently so pupils are kept on their toes. However, in Years 1 and 2 although teachers' detailed planning clearly identified pupils of different ability, in reality there is not enough support for pupils with special educational needs, their activities are repetitive and they are expected to sit and listen for far too long. Work provided for higher attaining Year 2 pupils is not sufficiently challenging to enable them to reach the higher Level 3 in national tests.
67. Teachers throughout the school mark work but in some cases there is little evidence of pupils being told what steps to take next to improve their work. There is very little evidence of target setting, either individual or group, to motivate pupils or encourage them to greater efforts.
68. The majority of pupils enjoy mathematics and behave well, although some become restless on occasions when their work is not well matched to their needs. For instance, high attainers lose interest when their work is too easy, while the motivation of pupils with special educational needs rapidly evaporates because they have not enough to do. However, in Years 6 and 7, pupils are set by ability so their work is very closely matched to their needs and contains suitably fine-tuned challenges that keep them



thinking and eager to learn. This good practice is having a positive impact on their rate of progress in lessons.

## **Mathematics across the curriculum**

69. Pupils make satisfactory use of their mathematical skills, knowledge and understanding in other subjects. In design and technology, they deploy their skills in measuring accurately. In science, they present information and results using tables, graphs and charts. In ICT, they construct different ways of presenting results using pie charts, block graphs and line graphs.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' investigative skills are developed consistently throughout the school.
- Pupils co-operate very well in practical work.
- Teachers' marking does not give pupils a clear idea of the strengths and weaknesses in their learning.
- Sometimes teaching concentrates too much in older year groups on recording facts rather than developing pupils' understanding.

### **Commentary**

70. Year 2 teacher assessments in 2004 showed that standards were well below the national average, but well above average at the higher Level 3. The assessments for 2005, yet to be validated, show improvement. Standards in Year 2 matched the national average, with attainment at the higher level remaining above average. The results of national tests for 2004 showed standards to be below the national average at Year 6 at both the expected and higher level and below average when compared with similar schools. The results for 2005 show an improvement and standards now match the national average at both levels. The performance of boys in the tests compared with the national picture is significantly higher than that of girls. However, the inspection found no significant differences in attainment between boys and girls. At the end of Year 7, when pupils leave school, their attainment is similar to that expected for their age.

71. Inspection findings confirm that standards overall are average by Year 2, Year 6 and Year 7. Standards have improved in Years 1 and 2 because of the improved curriculum planning which now ensures that each aspect of science is given similar weight. Standards match expectations in every aspect of the science curriculum and pupils' achievement is satisfactory throughout the school. Pupils make good progress in the lessons where teachers have high expectations of them and set time targets to encourage good levels of achievement. Higher attaining pupils in Years 3 to 6 apply their literacy skills to good effect, using scientific terms and language accurately to draw together the threads of their learning to explain more abstract concepts. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.

72. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teachers plan the structure of their lessons soundly and most identify the key questions that underpin the major focus of the learning. They share the learning objectives clearly with their pupils so that pupils know in general terms what they are expected to learn. However, lesson plans are often

pitched towards the average attaining pupils and do not consistently identify the learning objectives for groups of pupils of different abilities. This means that teaching is less well focused for all groups than it could be. Marking of pupils' work is not always to the same standard and too often confined to supportive comments which do not give pupils a clear idea of the progress they are making against the learning objectives or show them how they can improve. Satisfactory support for pupils with special educational needs means they work alongside their peers and achieve satisfactorily.

73. There is some good teaching in science and, where this occurs, teachers have a good grasp of the nature of different types of science investigations and plan for a balance of these throughout the year. They give clear and structured support to pupils' recording which encourages them to explore their own predictions and check their results against their hypotheses. The best teaching also picks up on pupils' misconceptions and provides chances for them to adjust their ideas in the light of their results. As pupils get older, the balance of recording their science knowledge shifts to copying scientific facts. Whilst this serves a particular learning purpose, too much means that teachers cannot judge pupils' understanding accurately. Homework is regularly set and often requires pupils to do their own research and apply their science knowledge to explaining events. Pupils behave well in lessons, even when the activities are messy and exciting. They organise themselves sensibly and show high levels of co-operation.
74. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The subject leader provides practical advice and support which has helped to develop a more coherent approach to the recording of scientific investigation. It has also ensured a full coverage of the programmes of study. However, until recently different assessment systems were in use to record pupils' attainment and achievement which meant that there was little consistency in the information they gave so that their usefulness was limited. Pupils' progress and attainment are not analysed with sufficient rigour throughout the year in order to set group or individual targets to ensure that pupils achieve as well as they can and improve the overall attainment.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in information and communication technology is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The use of new resources is becoming increasingly effective in raising standards.
- Teachers' planning has started to impact positively on providing increased opportunity for pupils to apply their ICT skills in other subjects.
- Teachers do not assess pupils' attainment regularly.
- Pupils' keyboard skills are developing well.

### **Commentary**

75. Standards have been maintained when considering the increased curriculum demands in the last six years. Years 1 and 2 pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations at the end of Year 2. Pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations at the end of Year 6 and Year 7. Pupils' achievement is now satisfactory in all year groups and in every class. There have been considerable improvements to the ICT provision since the last inspection and these improvements have started to have a good impact on the pupils' attitudes and interest in the subject.

76. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in Years 1 to 7. Teachers have improved their subject knowledge and increased in confidence. Pupils' growing competence is evident in the way they tackle logging on, navigating through a menu and using a dialogue box. Teachers are becoming increasingly confident in their use of terms when describing processes and giving instructions. This improved expertise ensures that all pupils progress well in their acquisition of keyboard skills and satisfactorily in their understanding of the application of different aspects of the ICT curriculum. In some lessons, teachers do not always notice when pupils need particular help and sometimes miss opportunities to draw the class together to make a teaching point so that all pupils' learning can be advanced. In the good lessons, teachers expect their pupils to develop an independent and experimental approach in their use of programs which leads to good achievement.
77. Due to the absence of the co-ordinator the quality of the leadership and management cannot be judged. All aspects of the curriculum are being covered by each year group to ensure the pupils have a satisfactory grounding in the use of ICT and this gives a clear direction to raising standards and increasing teachers' expectations of their pupils' achievement. However, teachers do not assess the standards reached by individual pupils in order to provide work to meet pupils' various ICT competencies. The recent employment of a technician has enabled the teachers to concentrate on teaching. Resources for learning are good and have been further improved with the recent introduction of interactive whiteboards in all classrooms.

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

78. The use of ICT to support learning across the curriculum is satisfactory. Pupils use the Internet regularly, access a range of programs to gain knowledge and improve presentation of their work as they develop the skills to edit and amend. They use their multi-media skills to improve their work on a variety of history and geography topics and in science they successfully produce computer-generated graphs and tables.

## **HUMANITIES**

### **History and geography**

79. Insufficient evidence was available to make judgements about provision in history and geography as no lessons were observed in either subject. Pupils' books and teachers' planning were examined which indicate that all aspects of the subjects are covered satisfactorily. Teachers make good use of ICT to help pupils' learning in both subjects.
80. In **history**, teaching succeeds in encouraging pupils to use a wide variety of sources to understand past events. Pupils use books, the Internet and other ICT resources as well as drawing on their own first hand experiences of visiting sites and listening to visitors. The subject is well used to develop pupils' literacy skills in Years 3 to 7. Pupils in Year 6 produce a very good standard in their imaginary accounts of being an evacuee during World War II and similarly Year 7 pupils write well about the Black Death. There are good links with other subjects such as geography which help pupils appreciate the context of events such as Tudor exploration, World War II and the Roman Empire. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 develop a sound understanding of past and present through studies of seaside and local history but the amount of written work is limited.
81. In **geography**, pupils develop good mapping skills and acquire a satisfactory understanding of themes such as the environment and water and its effects on

landscapes. Pupils make good use of the locality to explore how settlements differ and change and compare their findings with information on other localities such as the Scottish Isles and India. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 develop a good appreciation of how to construct and interpret maps and plans and link these to aerial photographs of the area. Pupils in older classes use maps well to provide a background for their work in other subjects such as history. Literacy and numeracy skills are effectively developed for pupils through research, the writing of accounts and the interpretation and presentation of data.

82. **Religious education** was inspected separately from this inspection because the school is Voluntary Aided.

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

83. Teachers plan a varied and interesting range of activities in **art and design**. Much work is linked with other subjects such as geography, history or science which means that art activities are put into a suitable context. Pupils study the work of famous artists and use this work as a starting point for their own pictures, analysing the composition and colour range in the original and imaginatively adapting and developing their own pieces. Work is planned using a satisfactory range of media and includes sculpture and other 3D work. Visits to galleries help pupils understand a range of different art forms and develop their speaking, listening and writing skills well.

84. Due to inspection priorities and limited time, work in **design and technology** was not fully inspected. From work samples and discussions with pupils, it is evident that the full programme of study for the subject is covered and pupils develop a satisfactory understanding of designing, making and evaluating. The subject is suitably planned and regularly taught. This is especially true in Years 5, 6 and 7 where groups of pupils are taught by a specialist in the well-equipped art and design studio.

## **Music**

Provision in music is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The overall quality of teaching is good throughout the school.
- Resources and accommodation for music are good.
- The co-ordinator is a music specialist but has had no time to monitor the subject.

### **Commentary**

85. Pupils throughout the school reach standards that are above national expectations in performing, listening and appraising. There was insufficient evidence of composing to make a secure judgement. Pupils achieve well and make good progress because teachers have confidence, significant expertise and the ability to generate genuine enthusiasm for their subject. Some class teachers are well deployed to make good use of their specialist knowledge and practical skills by teaching other year groups. Lessons are well structured and interesting so pupils concentrate hard, are eager to learn and behave very well. All pupils have access to all musical activities in accordance with the school's stance on educational inclusion. The quality of teaching provided by the peripatetic service in a wide range of instruments is very good. In these lessons,

teachers continuously assess their pupils very accurately, resulting in accelerated progress.

86. The broad curriculum is enriched through a good range of interesting events, including festivals and concerts not only in school but also in the wider community. The school choir, orchestra and recorder groups meet regularly to rehearse and perform. These activities enhance pupils' personal and social education since they are required to listen carefully and work together closely in order to produce a successful performance. There are good opportunities for the development of pupils' awareness of other cultures as the school welcomes musicians from Africa, India and Japan. There are good links with other subjects such as drama, literature, religious education and ICT.
87. Standards have been maintained since the time of the last inspection. There is a good scheme of work supported by a good range of well-organised resources and a spacious music room with good storage facilities. The co-ordinator, who provides good leadership and management, is knowledgeable and enthusiastic, providing a very good model through the very high quality of her own teaching. She readily provides advice and support for her colleagues although she has had no opportunities to monitor her subject on a formal basis.

### **Physical education**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- A wide range of sporting activities is available to pupils who show good co-ordination and control and a determination to succeed.
- The co-ordinator is a physical education specialist and inspires pupils and staff with his high levels of enthusiasm and fitness.
- Very good specialist teaching by two members of staff raises pupils' achievement.

### **Commentary**

88. Standards in physical education are above the national expectations by the end of Year 6. No lessons were seen in Years 1, 2 and 7 so it is not possible to judge attainment and achievement in these year groups. Pupils have very good access to gymnastics, games, sports, dance, athletics and swimming. Teachers make good use of both the attractive outdoor and indoor facilities and, during the inspection, never missed sessions because of inclement weather.
89. In the majority of the lessons seen pupils achieve very well because teaching is very good. The two specialist teachers demonstrate technical skills well and have high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour and focus skilfully on developing pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. As a result pupils learn skills and techniques systematically.
90. Teaching and learning are very good. The specialist teachers have outstanding subject knowledge and expect and challenge all pupils to achieve highly. In a very good tennis lesson in Year 5 one of the specialist teachers explained clearly to the pupils exactly what was expected of them and how to achieve the end result which was to improve their forehand play. Pupils enjoyed their lesson as the teacher had excellent organisational skills and ensured that pupils changed partners swiftly with no time wasted so that they used the whole lesson to further their rallying skills. The pupils made very good progress because their behaviour was exemplary and they understood the value of practising the skills.
91. The co-ordinator provides very good leadership and management. He possesses excellent subject knowledge and expertise which is skilfully conveyed to all pupils, thereby raising their attainment and achievement. For instance, he has implemented a highly successful warm-up

system to physical education lessons which is used and extended by all staff from reception to Year 7. All Year 3 pupils go swimming and the vast majority learn to swim a minimum of 25 metres. Any pupil who cannot swim this distance has another opportunity in Years 6 and 7 so no pupil leaves unable to swim at least 25 metres.

92. The high profile of physical education in the school has been raised even further through the school's success in achieving an Active Mark. The provision is also significantly enriched through a wide range of extra-curricular activities including the highly successful annual Year 7 ski trip to France. Physical education makes a very good contribution to pupils' personal and social skills.

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

93. Although not enough lessons were seen to make a judgement on teaching, it is clear that provision is good. In the reception classes personal, social and emotional development receives much attention. The good skills gained by younger children are maintained throughout Years 1 and 2 as pupils learn about themselves as developing individuals and as members of the school community. Good opportunities are provided in weekly discussion times for pupils to talk about how to live successfully and happily together.
94. Healthy eating and the importance of exercise are given a high priority in the school. Reception children and Year 1 and 2 pupils learn the importance of eating fresh fruit daily and many regularly walk to school via the highly effective parent-organised 'walking bus'. They enjoy selecting sports equipment at lunchtimes, along with older pupils, to use in the well-organised 'zone parcs' (areas of the playground which are sectioned off for specific sporting activities) which are supervised calmly and efficiently by Year 7 pupils. Pupils learn to share, take turns and help others to consider people's feelings and needs. Year 6 play leaders also successfully help younger pupils to become aware of their own and other pupils' rights and responsibilities in the playground and how to resolve simple arguments and to resist bullying.
95. Older pupils in Years 5, 6 and 7 are successfully developing an awareness of being good citizens at school. They have numerous opportunities to take responsibility including looking after the school environment by collecting litter, assisting the midday supervisors by acting as mediators for younger pupils and organising zone parc activities. Pupils are very aware of the needs of people in other parts of the world. For instance, Year 6 pupils instigated and organised a very successful car wash to raise money for the Tsunami appeal and many pupils are currently very interested in the outcomes of the G8 summit.
96. Year 7 pupils have weekly citizenship lessons in which they maturely and very sensibly discuss pertinent issues. For instance, they debate the statement 'You can choose your friends but you can't choose your family', showing a clear understanding of the way in which 'peer pressure' can dominate parental guidance amongst adolescents. The highly popular annual Year 7 ski trip enables pupils to develop confidence and take more responsibility both individually and as a group, thereby making the most of their abilities.

97. A school council has been in existence since 2004 which is having a positive impact on helping pupils to develop their personal and social skills and to become better citizens. Year 6 and 7 pupils would like to be consulted more in making decisions and there are plans to develop the council further so that all pupils are involved. The outcomes of the good provision are positive as seen in pupils' good behaviour and attitudes. These are positive features in helping to raise attainment and achievement.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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