

INSPECTION REPORT

ST BARTHOLOMEW'S CE PRIMARY SCHOOL (VA)

Wootton Bassett, Swindon

LEA area: Wiltshire

Unique reference number: 126373

Headteacher: Mrs Suzanne Lane

Lead inspector: Mr Graham R Sims

Dates of inspection: Monday 27th – Thursday 30th June 2005

Inspection number: 267746

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	313
School address:	St Bartholomew's CE Primary School The Rosary Wootton Bassett SWINDON Wiltshire
Postcode:	SN4 8AZ
Telephone number:	01793 853288
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Louise Sheppard
Date of previous inspection:	8 th March 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St Bartholomew's CE Primary School serves the town and parish of Wootton Bassett to the south of Swindon. It is a voluntary aided Church of England primary school. With 313 boys and girls on roll between the ages of 4 and 11, the school is larger than most primary schools. The socio-economic circumstances of the pupils vary, but are average overall, although a below average proportion of pupils take their entitlement to free school meals. Very few pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds and no pupil is at an early stage of learning English. The number of pupils entering the school after the start of the reception year, and leaving the school before Year 6, is average. Sixteen per cent of the pupils have been identified as having special educational needs, which is below average. Nine pupils receive help from outside specialists for a range of needs, including moderate learning, social, emotional, behavioural and physical difficulties. Four pupils have Statements of Special Educational Needs. Most children have attended privately run playgroups before they join the school. Children are admitted into the reception class at the beginning of the year in which they have their fifth birthday, with younger children attending on a part-time basis for the first term. The attainment of children varies widely but is average overall. Apart from in the two reception classes, all other pupils are taught in classes with mixed-age groups. The socio-economic circumstances of the pupils and their attainment on entry are both lower than they were at the time of the last inspection. Since that time, various improvements have been made to the school's accommodation. A new headteacher was appointed in 2001 and a new deputy headteacher in 2002. In January 2003, the school's status changed from voluntary controlled to voluntary aided. The inspection of religious education and collective worship is carried out separately under Section 23 of the Schools Inspections Act 1996 (Denominational Education) by an inspector approved by the Diocese and appointed by the governing body.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
28899	Mr G R Sims	Lead inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Modern foreign languages
13874	Mrs J Chesterfield	Lay inspector	
22434	Mrs S Bradshaw	Team inspector	Science Geography History Foundation Stage curriculum
20645	Ms R Webber	Team inspector	English Art Design and technology Music Physical education Personal, social and health education and citizenship Special educational needs

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

St Bartholomew's CE Primary School provides a **satisfactory** quality of education and has some good features. The ethos of the school is good, and hard-working staff provide a good standard of care for the pupils. The leadership team works very hard to bring about improvement and has implemented many initiatives, but these have not yet had the desired effect of improving standards. Pupils make satisfactory progress and achieve average standards by the time they leave the school. The overall quality of the teaching is satisfactory. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Children are provided with a good start to their education and make good progress in the reception classes.
- Junior pupils achieve well in English and reach above average standards by the end of Year 6.
- Teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve and do not do enough to develop pupils' independent learning skills.
- Although the school undertakes many assessment activities, it does not have a simple system to keep track of pupils' progress or to identify clearly what pupils need to do to improve.
- The school makes good provision for the creative arts, but the planning of other subjects lacks creativity and imagination and misses opportunities to develop basic skills.
- Pupils demonstrate great enthusiasm and derive much benefit from the school's very good range of enrichment activities.
- The headteacher and senior staff demonstrate a strong commitment to improvement.
- Good attention is given to pupils' personal development, standards of behaviour and relationships are good, and the school has a welcoming and friendly feel to it.
- The governing body is strongly committed to and very supportive of the school and its staff.

There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. The school has tackled all of the key issues highlighted in the previous inspection, some of them more effectively than others. There is now a more consistent approach to the teaching of literacy, and provision for information and communication technology has improved. The school has introduced some exciting new initiatives, such as its link with a school in Zambia. There has, however, been little improvement in the standards achieved by junior pupils and standards at the end of Year 2 have fallen.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Overall, pupils achieve **satisfactorily** and reach average standards by the end of Year 6.

The attainment of children when they join the school varies considerably, but is average overall. Children make good progress during their reception year. The great majority of children achieve and sometimes exceed the goals expected for their age in all areas of learning, and the standards of the current group of children will be above average by the time they start Year 1.

Standards at the end of Year 2 have fallen since the last inspection, reflecting lower levels of attainment on entry than before. The national test results at the end of Year 2 in 2004 were average in reading and mathematics and above average in writing. When compared with similar schools, standards were average in writing, below average in reading and well below average in mathematics. Preliminary results for 2005 show a further fall in reading and writing and a slight improvement in mathematics. Inspection findings indicate that standards are average in English, mathematics and science, that pupils are generally making satisfactory progress, but that the more able pupils are not sufficiently challenged.

Standards in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6 have not improved as much as in other schools. The results of the national tests in 2004 were above the national average in English and average in mathematics and science. When compared with similar schools, the results were above average overall. Inspection findings indicate that pupils achieve well and reach above average standards in English. Pupils' achievement and standards in mathematics and science are average. Both infant and junior pupils achieve well and reach above average standards in art and design and music. They make satisfactory progress and achieve average standards in information and communication technology, design and technology, geography and history. Standards and progress in physical education were not evaluated during this inspection.

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

Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is **good**. Provision for their spiritual development is very good. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. Pupils are particularly enthusiastic when engaged in practical activities and special events. Older pupils enjoy taking on special responsibilities around the school and carry out these duties well. Attendance is above average and punctuality is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a **satisfactory** quality of education.

The overall quality of teaching and learning is **satisfactory**. It is good in the reception class. The teachers are hard-working and conscientious in their planning. They relate well to the pupils, ensure good standards of behaviour in lessons and make good use of the support provided by capable teaching assistants, especially to provide help for pupils with special educational needs. However, they do not always have high enough expectations of what the pupils are capable of achieving and do not do enough to develop pupils' independent learning skills. When marking pupils' work, the teachers do not always give pupils a clear enough indication of what they have done well or what they need to improve. The school collects a lot of assessment data, but does not use this as effectively as it could to plan future work and keep track of pupils' progress.

Overall, the school provides a satisfactory curriculum, which gives due weight to all subjects of the National Curriculum. The curriculum for children in the reception class is good. The school provides good opportunities to develop pupils' creativity in art and design and music, but curricular planning for other subjects lacks imagination and creativity. There are not enough opportunities for pupils to use and develop basic skills of literacy, numeracy and

information and communication technology across the curriculum. The school provides a very good range of additional opportunities, including extra-curricular activities, for learning beyond lessons. Staffing, accommodation and resources are satisfactory overall.

The school takes good care of its pupils and has good procedures to ensure pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. It provides them with satisfactory support, advice and guidance. The school has good systems for seeking, valuing and acting on the views of the pupils. The school's partnership with parents is satisfactory. There are good links with other schools and the local community.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall quality of leadership and management is **satisfactory**. The headteacher and senior staff have a strong desire to bring about improvement and have worked hard to improve the school's procedures and implement new initiatives. These have not yet been successful in raising standards because the school's evaluation of its own performance is not rigorous enough and staff do not always understand or fully implement new initiatives. The school is trying to attack too many fronts at the same time, and staff are not clear what the main priorities are. Governance is good. Governors are fully involved in the life of the school and development initiatives, provide very good support for the headteacher and senior staff and go to great lengths to inform themselves about what is happening. The governing body ensures that the school fulfils statutory requirements.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are satisfied with the school on the whole and very keen to be involved in its work. However, a significant minority of parents have some justified concerns about the school, particularly with regard to the way the school communicates with them and the consistency with which the school's homework policy is implemented. Concerns of some parents regarding bullying were not substantiated by the inspection team.

Pupils are happy at school and particularly enjoy the exciting extra-curricular and special events available to them. They would like their lessons to be more interesting and challenging.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the school should do to improve standards and pupils' achievement are:

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning, in particular: teachers' expectations and the level of challenge they provide; the pace at which lessons are conducted; the guidance given to pupils when marking their work; the use of assessment to keep track of pupils' progress and inform future planning.
- Improve the planning of the curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 6, in particular: opportunities for cross-curricular work; the development of independent learning skills; the use and development of basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology across the curriculum.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management, in particular: the rigour of the school's self-evaluation; the prioritisation of development issues; the follow-up of development initiatives.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Overall, pupils' achievement is **satisfactory** and standards are **average** at the end of Years 2 and 6. Achievement in the reception classes is **good** and standards are **above average**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make good progress in the reception classes and many achieve above average standards by the time they start Year 1.
- Although pupils' make satisfactory progress overall in Years 1 and 2, more able pupils do not always achieve as well as they could because they are not challenged sufficiently.
- Pupils achieve well in English in Years 3 to 6 and reach above average standards by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils achieve well and reach above average standards by the end of Years 2 and 6 in art and design and music.

Commentary

1. The attainment of children when they start their primary education at St Bartholomew's varies widely, but has declined since the previous inspection as the school's catchment has changed. It has moved from being above average in most years to being average for the last few years. The attainment of the current group of children when they started their reception year, however, was somewhat better than in previous years. Children make good progress and achieve well in the reception class, with the great majority of children achieving the goals expected for their age in each area of learning and some exceeding them by the end of the reception year. The children show a keen interest in learning which arises from the stimulating environment and good teaching which lay good foundations for children's learning in the rest of the school.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores¹ in 2004

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	16.2 (16.6)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	15.6 (15.6)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	16.0 (17.3)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 50 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. The school's national test results at the end of Year 2 have fallen since the last inspection, in contrast to the national trend which has been one of gradual

¹ **Average point scores** are used as a way of comparing fairly the performance of pupils in one school with those in another. The level achieved by each pupil in the national tests is converted into a points score. The points achieved by all of the pupils are added together and divided by the number of pupils who took the test to arrive at an average point score. An average point score of 15 at the end of Year 2 is equivalent to a middle of the range Level 2, which is the standard expected of seven-year-old pupils. At the end of Year 6, an average point score of 27 is equivalent to Level 4, the national expectation for eleven-year-olds.

improvement. The national test results in writing in 2004 were above the national average, and in reading and mathematics they were average. The teachers' assessments for science were well above the national average, although evidence from the inspection suggests that this evaluation was over-optimistic. When compared with similar schools, the results were average in writing, below average in reading and well below average in mathematics. The preliminary results for 2005, for which national comparative data are not yet available, show a further fall in reading and writing, but a slight improvement in mathematics.

3. Inspection findings indicate that standards at the end of Year 2 are average in all aspects of English, mathematics and science. Pupils are making steady progress and achieving satisfactorily. The fall in standards since the previous inspection reflects the changing nature of the school's intake. The school's results in 2004 were affected by a higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs than in previous years and an abnormally large proportion of summer-born children. In 2005, the fall in English results reflects the fact that three-quarters of the year group are boys who, over the last few years, have not achieved as good results as girls. A further factor affecting the most recent results, however, is that the more able pupils are not always sufficiently challenged. This is reflected in the below average proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 in mathematics and a reduced proportion of pupils achieving this level in 2005 in reading and writing.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.3 (29.2)	26.9 (26.8)
Mathematics	27.6 (27.5)	27.0 (26.8)
Science	28.9 (29.7)	28.6 (28.6)

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

4. Results in the national tests at the end of Year 6 have fluctuated quite markedly, with pupils performing better in one subject one year, then better in another subject the following year. The overall trend, however, has been for results to remain at a similar level to those pertaining at the time of the previous inspection. As the national trend over the last six years has been one of improvement, the school's results no longer compare as favourably with other schools as before. In 2004, the national test results were above the national average in English and average in mathematics and science. When compared with similar schools on the basis of pupils' prior attainment, the results were well above average in English, above average in mathematics and average in science. Preliminary results from the 2005 tests indicate a fall in English and mathematics and similar results in science to those in 2004. The proportion of pupils exceeding the national expectation in English is high, but in 2005 a larger proportion of pupils than before did not reach the national expectation of Level 4. In mathematics, the proportion of pupils exceeding the national expectation is below average. The school sets itself realistic targets on the basis of pupils' prior attainment, but it has not met all of its targets in either 2004 or 2005. The inspection findings indicate that standards are above average and pupils are achieving well in English, and that standards are average and pupils' achievement satisfactory in mathematics and science.
5. Standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 in information and communication technology are average and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. This is an improvement over the findings of the previous inspection, when progress and attainment in information and

communication technology were identified as areas for further development. Pupils throughout the school achieve well and reach above average standards in art and design and music, both subjects in which they benefit significantly from a very good range of extra-curricular activities and additional learning opportunities. Standards and pupils' achievement in design and technology, geography and history are generally satisfactory. Standards and progress were not evaluated in physical education during this inspection.

6. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. This group of pupils achieve similarly to other pupils in the school because their needs are well catered for through additional support in lessons from support staff and through suitably planned and modified tasks, particularly in literacy lessons, that are appropriate to their specific learning needs. The differences in boys' and girls' attainment in English at the end of Year 2 has all but disappeared by the end of Year 6, but boys achieve better results than girls in mathematics. The school is aware of this difference, but there is no immediately obvious reason for it.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are many good features to the way the school promotes pupils' personal development.
- Pupils show great enthusiasm for certain aspects of school life.
- The school fosters pupils' spirituality very well.

Commentary

7. Pupils enjoy school and are very enthusiastic about the great opportunities they have outside lessons to develop new skills and talents, particularly in the creative arts, to learn about other societies, and to show that they are responsible members of their own community. The school promotes pupils' social and cultural awareness well and is justifiably proud of the links it has forged with Zambia and France, which open up new worlds to its pupils. Multi-cultural provision is much improved since the last inspection, and the school is focusing now on increasing pupils' understanding of the ethnic diversity of modern Britain. The school sets high moral standards for its pupils and has high expectations for their behaviour. Pupils who find it hard to behave properly are given intensive support to help minimise their impact on others. The school's pervading Christian ethos means that all pupils are accepted and valued, and the school is very successful in giving pupils a sense of their own worth and their uniqueness as individuals. There have, however, been two exclusions in the last year, reflecting the firm line taken by the school on unacceptable behaviour. The school fosters spirituality very well, and this is evident in the high quality assemblies and in the attention the school draws to the wonders of nature and of creativity.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	287	2	0
White – any other White background	5	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	3	0	0
Any other ethnic group	2	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	1	0	0

The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

8. Although pupils say they enjoy school, they say that subjects like English, maths and religious education can be repetitive and dull. However, when teachers fail to spark their pupils' imaginations, the pupils' sense of self-discipline and their good manners take over, and they follow instructions and complete their tasks obediently. The pupils clearly prefer practical lessons, such art and design and physical education, where they are active and busy all the time. The pupils are very willing to take on responsibility around the school and fulfil their tasks well.

9. The level of attendance for 2003/04, the latest year for which comparative data are available, was well above the national average. Attendance has dropped during the current school year, but this is because of the poor attendance of pupils from a very small number of families where outside intervention has been necessary, and not because of a general decline in attendance. Unauthorised absence has risen because the school has rightly tightened up on its procedures for authorising holidays during term-time.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year – 2003-2004 (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	3.6	School data:	0.0
National data:	5.1	National data:	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is **satisfactory**. The overall quality of the teaching is **satisfactory**. The school provides a **satisfactory** curriculum, which is enriched by a **very good** variety of activities outside the normal curriculum. The staff provide a **good** level of care for the pupils. The school's links with parents are **satisfactory**, and links with the local community and other schools are **good**.

Teaching and learning

The quality of the teaching and the standards of learning are **satisfactory** in Years 1 to 6 and **good** in the reception classes. The school's use of assessment is **good** in the reception classes, but **unsatisfactory** in Years 1 to 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning in the reception classes is consistently good.
- Good behaviour management and good relationships between teachers and pupils establish a positive learning environment in all classes.
- Teaching assistants provide good support for pupils with special educational needs.
- Teachers do not always provide sufficient challenge for pupils and limit opportunities for them to apply their skills in different contexts and to develop their independence.
- The school lacks a clear and simple system for keeping track of pupils' progress.
- Teachers do not give pupils clear enough guidance on what they need to do to improve when marking their work.

Commentary

10. Overall, the quality of the teaching and standards of pupils' learning are satisfactory. This judgement is not as favourable as that made in the previous inspection, when the quality of teaching was judged to be good. During this inspection, there were no unsatisfactory lessons, an improvement on the previous inspection, but proportionately fewer good, very good and excellent lessons. The teachers are far from complacent. Indeed, they are hardworking and committed to their work. In the intervening period, there has been a significant amount of training, and teachers' expertise has improved in information and communication technology and art and design. In recent years, however, there has been a growing reliance on published schemes of work and some of the teaching observed during this inspection, and evidenced in pupils' work over the course of the year, lacks creativity and imagination. There also appears to have been a premium on quantity, rather than quality from which neither teachers nor pupils have gained maximum benefit.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 40 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	1 (3)	15 (38)	24 (60)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages.

11. The quality of the teaching and standards of learning in the reception classes are consistently good and, as a result, children are achieving well in all areas of learning. There is good teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants, and this ensures effective support for children's learning. Through their collaborative lesson planning, the teachers provide effective learning opportunities in all areas of learning.
12. In the rest of the school, the teachers have developed a much more collaborative approach to planning which results in a more consistent quality of teaching than was

apparent at the time of the previous inspection. The teachers manage pupils' behaviour well, establish an orderly learning environment in which they are free to teach and pupils are free to learn. Relationships between teachers and pupils are good. The pupils also contribute significantly to this through their good behaviour, even in lessons which are not particularly interesting. The teachers are well aware of the differing needs of pupils within their classes, especially now that all classes contain pupils from mixed-age groups.

13. There is good liaison between teachers and capable teaching assistants who provide a good level of support for pupils with special educational needs, enabling them to make sound progress in relation to their prior attainment. The individual learning targets identified on pupils' individual educational plans are appropriate to the needs of the pupils and are used well by teachers to plan relevant work. Pupils are assessed effectively by the special educational needs co-ordinator against their individual learning targets and these assessments are used well by teachers to help them with their future planning.
14. There are, however, a number of weaknesses in the teaching which prevent pupils from making better progress. Teachers do not always have high enough expectations of what the pupils are capable of, or should be, achieving. This is particularly the case with the older and more able pupils in a class and is seen in the tasks given to these pupils and the time during whole-class teaching sessions when the focus of attention is directed at the middle and lower bands. Too much of the work is too closely directed by the teacher, leaving little scope for pupils to try things out for themselves and develop independent learning skills. This is seen particularly in the quantity of unchallenging and uninspiring worksheets which are used, but also in the prescriptive nature of some investigative work and the lack of opportunity for pupils to apply the skills they have learnt in different contexts. The pace of some lessons is too leisurely and lacks a sense of urgency, and some teachers have a tendency to spend far too long on the introductions to their lessons. Teachers do not always follow the school's stated procedures for setting homework, a cause of discontentment amongst some parents, and an area which the school acknowledges it needs to improve.
15. The school carries out a wide range of assessments, but the use to which the information is put and its helpfulness in keeping track of pupils' progress are unsatisfactory. The range of information kept varies from class to class, and some agreed procedures, such as those for information and communication technology, are not carried out systematically by everybody. Whilst individual assessments provide sufficient data to place pupils in teaching groups or to set them for mathematics, the school lacks a clear and simple system for keeping track of pupils' progress as they move through the school or to identify quickly and easily if a pupil is under-performing. Recent initiatives to bring improvement to the school's assessment procedures, such as subscribing to a service which marks and analyses pupils' performance in end-of-year tests, have yet to have an impact.
16. Except for English, day-to-day assessment procedures through the marking of pupils' work are also weak. Pupils' work is checked regularly, and teachers occasionally write positive comments at the end of a piece of work. However, they frequently overlook pupils' mistakes and do not give them a clear enough indication of what they have done well or what they need to improve. As a result, pupils are not aware of, and, therefore, do not learn enough from, the mistakes they make. In addition, not enough time is built into lessons for pupils to review work they have completed, either on their own, with the help of adults or through working with their peers, in order to make improvements. Individual targets are set for pupils, but some of them are far too general or are not relevant to what pupils will be learning in the immediate future, and not enough attention is given to the targets on a daily basis, with the result that pupils lose their focus on these areas for development.

The curriculum

The school provides a **satisfactory** curriculum and a **very good** range of activities outside the formal curriculum. The overall range of learning resources and the quality of the school's accommodation are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' learning is enhanced by a very good range of extra-curricular activities, visits and visitors to the school.
- There are very good opportunities for pupils to participate in the creative arts.
- Whilst meeting statutory guidance, the planning of the curriculum lacks creativity and imagination.
- Curricular provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good.
- Teachers miss opportunities to link teaching in one subject to what pupils are learning in other subjects.
- Basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology are not developed sufficiently across the curriculum.

Commentary

17. The school's curriculum fully meets statutory requirements. In addition, the school also offers its pupils the opportunity to learn French. Curricular provision for pupils with special educational needs, as for other pupils, is satisfactory. Although the curriculum is suitably broad and well balanced, the planning and delivery of the curriculum in many subjects lack imagination and creativity in order to make pupils' learning more interesting and vibrant. Teachers, particularly in Years 3 to 6, miss opportunities to link teaching in one subject to what pupils are learning in other subjects. However, the school does provide its pupils with very good opportunities to take part in the creative arts and this has a positive impact on the standards achieved in art and design and music. Curricular provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good. Effective planning ensures that children experience a good range of appropriate activities in all areas of learning. The school is fully committed to the principles of inclusion and ensures all pupils have equal access to the curriculum and all other activities it provides.
18. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are firmly established, but there are too few opportunities for pupils to use and develop their literacy and numeracy skills in subjects across the curriculum. The school provides a satisfactory programme to develop pupils' skills in the use of information and communication technology, but does not integrate the teaching of information and communication technology into other subjects sufficiently.
19. A very good range of extra-curricular activities is offered to both infant and junior pupils, and this significantly enhances the school's curricular provision. A well-planned programme of visits and visitors to the school and links with a school in Zambia offer further enrichment. The school provides a satisfactory programme of work for pupils' personal, social and health education and citizenship. Implementation of the school's sex and relationships policy is satisfactory and a new policy on education about drug misuse is soon to be implemented. Good links with pre-school establishments and the local secondary school ensure that pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
20. The school has a satisfactory number of appropriately qualified teachers and teaching assistants to meet the demands of the curriculum. The school's accommodation is

satisfactory and some significant improvements have been made since the previous inspection. The school has extended a number of classrooms and improved the accommodation for children in the reception classes. Some teaching areas, however, are still very cramped. The range of resources to teach the curriculum is satisfactory.

Care, guidance and support

The attention given to pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is **good**. Support, advice and guidance for pupils, based on monitoring, are **satisfactory**. Involvement of pupils in the school's work is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school shows a strong commitment to the pastoral care and well-being of its pupils.
- The school council gives pupils good opportunities to have their say.
- Playground supervision and organisation are not thorough enough.

Commentary

21. The Christian ethos of the school underpins its commitment to the pastoral care and well-being of its pupils. Good induction procedures help children get off to a smooth start and settle quickly in their new surroundings, while good child protection arrangements ensure that their welfare is monitored closely throughout their school career. In Year 6, personal, social and health education lessons and circle time² help pupils prepare for moving on to their next school. Pupils with specific difficulties, such as those with medical or behavioural needs, are supported sensitively and carefully. Teaching assistants perform a valuable role in helping pupils, for example, if they feel unwell or upset. Weaknesses in the school's systems for assessment mean that academic advice for pupils is not as strong as personal guidance.
22. Pupils of all ages are able to express their views regularly to the senior management team thanks to the weekly meetings of the school council, which is a well-established and well-organised part of school life. Those involved take their duties very seriously, and pupils can see that the council has made a real difference to the school, for example, through the improvements made to playground activities and equipment.
23. The school has more work to do to make break and lunchtime positive experiences for all pupils. The concerns of some parents about outdoor supervision are partly justified, because the spread-out nature of the site makes it hard to oversee effectively unless adults patrol it regularly. At present, it would be possible for pupils to behave badly without being noticed in the nooks and crannies around the playground. Pupils also feel that the playground is too cramped when the field is out of action, and that areas for different games need to be better organised so that pupils are not bumping into one another.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's partnership with parents is **satisfactory**. Links with the community and with other schools are **good**.

² During 'Circle Time' pupils discuss a wide range of personal and general issues. All pupils agree that no interruptions should occur and only one person at a time will speak. Respect for other pupils' views will occur at all times and, therefore, pupils feel confident that they can talk with ease and free from any form of interference or interruption from other children.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Lines of communication with parents, both in writing and in person, are not consistent enough.
- There are good opportunities for parents of children in the reception classes to meet teachers informally each day.
- Involvement with the community and other schools offers good new experiences to pupils.

Commentary

24. A number of parents have expressed concerns about the way the school communicates with them, and some of these concerns are justified. The school recognises, for example, that it needs to review its approach to homework, and that details of what pupils will be studying need to be sent out more frequently than once a year. Newsletters give parents good-quality information about the school, particularly through the reports of the curriculum committees, and plenty of notice about school events. However, they are only sent out once a month, which means that parents are not hearing from the school very often. The governors' annual report and the prospectus now contain all the information required by law. Reports to parents on their children's progress do not make it clear enough how well the children are doing for their age and contain too much jargon to be useful to parents who do not work in education. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are well informed about the progress of their children and are, appropriately, given copies of their children's individual educational plans with helpful suggestions as to how they might support their children at home in order to meet their individual learning targets.
25. Parents of children in the reception and infant classes have good opportunities to liaise with their children's teachers each morning and deal with any issues that may arise on a day-to-day basis. In contrast, it is almost impossible for parents of children in the junior classes to build up a working relationship with their children's teacher, as they do not get the chance to chat to them informally at the beginning or end of the day. This means that the transfer from the infants to the juniors represents a significant change for parents in how they relate to the school, though children feel that the transfer is not too difficult for them. Parents are very supportive of their children's education and are very keen to be involved with the school. Consultation with parents on matters which affect them does take place, but it is not yet done systematically enough to enable parents to play a proper part in planning for the school's future development. The school needs to help parents understand better their role in the decision-making process and make them aware of when their involvement would not be appropriate.
26. The school makes the most of the local community and its facilities to widen the range of what is available to pupils above and beyond their lessons. Work with the town council, for example, helps give pupils an insight into citizenship. Strong partnerships with other churches, such as celebrations at the Roman Catholic church, give pupils a perspective on the beliefs of others. The school collaborates successfully with other primary schools in the town to organise exciting activities in the areas of music, drama, and sport, and pupils learn a lot from taking part in these events. Close liaison with the local secondary school helps pupils in Year 6 to transfer easily to the next stage of their education.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall quality of leadership and management is **satisfactory**. The leadership of the headteacher and other key staff and the management of the school are **satisfactory**. The governance of the school is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher and senior staff have worked very hard to bring improvement, but new initiatives have yet to result in improved standards.
- The school's evaluation of its own performance is not rigorous enough.
- Whilst the school's development plan outlines many areas for development, the school is not clear enough about its main priorities.
- The governors are highly committed and very supportive of the school.
- Finances are managed well and the school evaluates its spending carefully.

Commentary

27. There are many positive aspects to the leadership of the school and the way it is managed. The headteacher, supported well by her senior staff, has a strong desire to bring improvement and has made considerable efforts to identify what needs to be improved, to update the school's procedures and to implement new initiatives. There is a strong, pastoral lead to the daily life of the school and a determination that pupils should have as broad an education as possible. The headteacher has been responsible for the many good enrichment activities and events in recent times. The headteacher, deputy and other senior managers act as effective role models to the rest of the school and have engendered a good team spirit amongst the staff. Good leadership is evident in English, and also in the area of special educational needs, where the co-ordinator works closely with teachers, support staff and outside agencies to support the teaching and learning of pupils with special educational needs. Overall, however, the efforts of the school's leaders to bring substantial improvement to the school have not yet been reflected in improvements in pupils' progress and the standards they achieve. There are various reasons for this.
28. Firstly, the school's evaluation of its own performance is not yet rigorous enough. Therefore, whilst the teaching in lessons is monitored by senior staff and there are good procedures, such as the 'focus fortnights', in which subject leaders monitor the quality of provision in their subject through a variety of activities, such as lesson observations, discussions with pupils and scrutiny of pupils' work, underlying weaknesses are not always identified.
29. Secondly, initiatives which have been introduced have not been fully embraced or become fully established. In some cases, this is because staff do not fully understand what is required. For example, staff are aware of the school's drive to provide a creative curriculum. They understand how this has an immediate impact on subjects like art and design, but not what the implications are for their planning of other subjects such as geography, history and science. In other cases, not enough time is devoted to implementing change. At times, it is assumed that changes will be implemented because they have been discussed, but there is insufficient follow-up to ensure that this is the case.
30. Thirdly, the school is trying to attack too many fronts at the same time. The school's development plan outlines many areas for development and contains action plans for each subject area. The school is also involved in a range of different initiatives, such as the 'Teachers' International Professional Development' programme, the 'Vibrant Schools' project run by Bath Spa University, and the 'Effective Early Learning' programme. In addition, the school is working towards 'Investors in People' status. All of these projects have brought benefit to the school and have the potential for bringing even further benefit, but with so much happening, staff are not really aware of where the priorities lie, energy is dissipated and the hoped-for improvements do not materialise as fully or as quickly as the school would like.

31. Fourthly, the school is not always clear enough about the prime focus for its development activities. Subject leaders have a clearer understanding of their roles than before, but do not have a clear enough focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning. Performance management procedures have been implemented, but there has been little evaluation of what impact they have had on improving standards. The headteacher has identified most of the weaknesses in teaching which are outlined earlier in the report, but there has not been a sufficiently sustained focus on improving these aspects as a matter of prime importance.
32. The school has a highly committed and very supportive governing body which shares the headteacher's high aspirations for the school. The governors are led very well by an experienced and extremely supportive chair. Individual governors spend considerable amounts of time giving great support to the school on a very regular and active basis. Individual governors are linked to all areas of the curriculum and are often in school to review their responsibilities. The governing body goes to great lengths to keep itself informed about what is happening and, in turn, keeps parents informed of its findings. Governors are committed to full inclusion of all pupils and fulfil their statutory duties well. They know the strengths of the school very well and are justifiably proud of the good things which the school and its pupils achieve. In the thoroughness with which they deal with school improvement matters and the eagerness with which they support the school, however, they have underestimated the time and effort required to implement change and have not established priorities sufficiently clearly.
33. The school manages its budget well. The school's bursar and finance committee evaluate spending carefully to accommodate the changes in pupil intake each year. Difficult decisions have not been shirked, and best value principles have been applied effectively in their meticulous forward planning. The previous financial audit was extremely positive, and the small number of recommendations have been put into action. Taking into consideration the standards achieved, the quality of education provided and the cost per pupil, the school gives satisfactory value for money.

Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	746 120
Total expenditure	757 806
Expenditure per pupil	2 509

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	42 912
Balance carried forward to the next	31 226

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

34. A good standard of provision has been maintained since the previous inspection. Children work in a stimulating environment that provides challenge and interest in all areas of the curriculum. Attainment on entry for the last few years has been at a fairly typical level for four-year-olds. This year, attainment on entry was above average. As a result of good teaching, children of all capabilities make good progress and achieve well. By the end of the reception year, most children will achieve the early learning goals³ in all areas of learning and several children will exceed them. Standards are, therefore, above average. All adults work well together, providing a good and imaginative curriculum that meets the needs of the children. Good leadership and management involve the whole team. Improvements are managed through good planning, monitoring and assessment procedures. Assessments are used to directly plan work at the right level for all children, including those who have special educational needs. There is a good balance between adult-led activities and those chosen by the children. The accommodation is satisfactory and high-quality resources provide children with an exciting place in which to learn.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The caring atmosphere enables children to establish good relationships.
- Well-established routines help children to learn about acceptable behaviour.
- Children are developing well their ability to work independently.

Commentary

35. Teaching in this important area of the curriculum is good. Children achieve well. Most will attain the early learning goals and many will exceed them by the end of the year. The good induction procedures, that include meetings for parents and school visits, together with the high-quality relationships, help children to feel secure; this enables most of them to settle very quickly into their class routines. The teachers and teaching assistants, who are kind and caring, infinitely patient and work well together, promote children's personal and social development well. Children have good attitudes towards their work and behave well. Children know the routines well, settle down to the activities quickly and behave sensibly. The great majority of children are eager to attempt all the activities provided and show interest in what they are doing. They are learning to concentrate on an activity to finish it. Children are expected to clear up after themselves, and many do this without much prompting.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

³ The Early Learning Goals are a set of standards which it is expected that most children will achieve by the end of the Foundation Stage. They are set out into six areas of learning: personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; creative development; physical development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good opportunities for children to talk to each other and to adults.
- Teachers use questioning very well to challenge children's thinking.
- Children are developing their understanding of letter sounds and their names well.

Commentary

36. Overall, the teaching in this area is good, and children benefit from the teachers' enthusiasm and the lively pace to lessons. Children achieve well and, by the end of the year, most will achieve the expected standards and several will exceed them. Teachers use questioning very well to challenge children's thinking. As a result, the children gain new knowledge and understanding week by week, and learning builds on what they have already achieved. The children are taught to listen to one another as soon as they start school, and this is reinforced in many activities. Listening skills are developing well, and most children talk confidently to visitors. Children regularly practise the names of sounds of all the letters and, by the time they enter Year 1, almost all children know a number of frequently used words, and several of them attempt to decode others by using their well-taught phonic⁴ skills. Children's reading skills are supported well by the effective home-reading arrangements for sharing books. Children are given many opportunities to form letters and to explore words and sentences. Several children can write simple sentences, and many others attempt to write their own accounts and stories.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teachers place a high emphasis on learning through practical experiences.
- Adults use every opportunity to encourage children to count.

Commentary

37. The teaching is good in this area of learning, and the high quality of practical activities helps children to make good progress and to achieve well. Most will attain the early learning goals and several will exceed them by the time they start in Year 1. Children benefit from the good support they receive from both teachers and teaching assistants who patiently help them to understand new mathematical ideas and practise the things they know. With good support, they apply their knowledge of estimation and number to measuring length and height. Most children confidently count forwards and backwards and really enjoy counting to a hundred. Interesting and stimulating activities provided in the classroom and outside motivate children to try hard and provide them with many opportunities to practise their developing knowledge of numbers.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

⁴ Phonics is a teaching programme aimed at developing an awareness of sounds in the spoken and written word. Pupils learn to read and pronounce words by linking the sounds they hear spoken with the letters, letter groups and syllables they see written.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching provides children with many opportunities to learn about the world around them.
- Children have good opportunities to explore the properties of different materials.

Commentary

38. Very little direct teaching was seen in this area of learning, but evidence from planned activities and recorded work indicates that most children will meet the expected standards by the end of the year and that they achieve well. Teachers place great emphasis on developing children's thinking skills and, from the very beginning, the children are encouraged to question and hypothesise about situations and events. They are developing their understanding of the importance and purpose of investigations as they seek to understand the world around them. They have been particularly interested in growing seeds and designing their own seed packets with illustrations and directions. Children are provided with a good range of construction toys and materials for them to explore and use their skills to make models. They have regularly planned opportunities to use the computers and, as a result, are making good progress in their ability to use the mouse and to draw pictures and patterns on the screen. Children learn some of the properties of different materials as they play with sand, water and fabrics with different textures. Visits and visitors, along with good resources, strongly support this area of learning and help most children to reach the early learning goals, with several exceeding them, by the end of the year.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's physical control is developing well.

Commentary

39. The teaching in this area of learning is good, and children achieve well. Most are on course to reach the early learning goals by the start of Year 1, and some will exceed them. Children use a variety of tools and equipment confidently and with good dexterity. They handle large-wheeled toys with confidence and use the stimulating outside play area with great energy and enthusiasm. Children's skills of handling bats and balls are developing well. Many are able to control small balls by bouncing, rolling and batting fairly accurately.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A wide range of activities gives children good opportunities to experiment with painting, drawing and modelling.

Commentary

40. The teaching in this area of learning is good, and children achieve well. Most are on course to reach the early learning goals by the start of Year 1, and some will exceed them. Most children have good skills of cutting, gluing, drawing and applying paint. They are given many opportunities to practise these skills as they are encouraged to choose activities in play situations. They create imaginative stories and scenarios as

they dress up and use equipment such as garden tools, wheelbarrows and picnic baskets in the role-play area. Good opportunities are provided for children to respond to music during quiet listening activities and when moving and dancing.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE

41. All pupils are taught **French** for between 15 and 30 minutes each week. This subject was not inspected in depth. Only a short part of one lesson was observed, pupils' work was scrutinised and a discussion was held with the enthusiastic subject co-ordinator. Younger pupils are enthusiastic about learning another language and quickly build a repertoire of simple vocabulary and sentence structures. The most effective teaching arrangement is in one of the classes for pupils in Years 1 and 2, where pupils have a short ten-minute session on most days before lunch. This provides them with constant reinforcement and avoids the difficulty experienced in most classes of pupils forgetting what they have learnt from one week to the next. The school has not yet initiated liaison with the foreign languages department of the secondary school to which pupils transfer.

English

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in reading and writing at the end of Year 2 have fallen since the previous inspection; pupils are not always challenged sufficiently.
- Pupils achieve well in reading and writing in Years 3 to 6 and reach above average standards.
- In speaking and listening, pupils achieve well and demonstrate above average standards throughout the school.
- Teachers generally provide pupils with good-quality teaching and a broad and well-balanced curriculum.
- Good leadership has ensured the school has dealt with weaknesses identified in previous inspection.
- There are insufficient planned opportunities to develop pupils' language and literacy skills across the curriculum.

Commentary

42. The national test results at the end of Year 2 in 2004 were above the national average in writing and average in reading. Since the previous inspection, the school's results have fallen, and preliminary results from the 2005 tests indicate that this trend has continued. The fall in standards is partly explained by the lower levels of attainment on entry in recent years, but also by the fact that pupils are not being challenged enough. Inspection findings indicate that pupils are generally making satisfactory progress and that standards in English are average by the end of Year 2.
43. Results at the end of Year 6 have been above the national average for a number of years, as they were in 2004. Although the results in 2004 were only marginally better than those at the time of the previous inspection, the overall improvement trend in recent years is similar to that in most schools. Preliminary results from the 2005 tests are lower than those in 2004, but still above the national average for the previous year.

Inspection findings indicate that pupils make good progress in Years 3 to 6, that pupils of all capabilities achieve well and that standards are above average.

44. In speaking and listening, pupils achieve well and standards in these aspects of English are above average throughout the school. This is because teachers provide plenty of well-planned opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking skills through a range of activities such as group and paired discussions, drama and role-play activities. Pupils throughout the school are articulate. They speak confidently in front of others and show they can express their ideas and viewpoints clearly. Pupils listen attentively to others, respond well to questioning and follow instructions well.
45. Standards in reading and writing are average at the end of Year 2 and above average at the end of Year 6. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in Years 1 and 2 and well in Years 3 to 6. Reading skills are taught effectively through well-structured guided reading activities and, by the end of Year 6, pupils read fluently and expressively. The school has recently reviewed and updated its reading resources in order to provide pupils with reading materials that will both interest and suitably challenge all ability levels.
46. By the end of Year 2, pupils have acquired a sound understanding of story structure and write simple stories and sentences which are usually demarcated correctly with full stops and capital letters. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of a range of punctuation. They select and use a wide range of vocabulary in order to make their writing interesting, and they construct and phrase complex sentences well in order to express what they mean within extended writing. They have a good understanding of grammar, and their spelling is usually good. Pupils' attainment in handwriting and presentational skills is weaker than in other aspects of writing.
47. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. It is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. At the time of the previous inspection, curricular planning and teachers' approaches to the teaching of the literacy hour were inconsistent across the school. This is no longer the case as the National Literacy Strategy is now fully and consistently implemented. The curriculum is broad and well balanced and, for much of the time, teachers provide pupils with effective opportunities to read, write, speak and listen. However, there are shortcomings in teaching in some lessons. On these occasions, the pace of lessons is too slow, teachers do not provide pupils, particularly the more able, with sufficiently challenging tasks, and teachers miss opportunities to model and demonstrate skills in order to support pupils' learning. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well. These pupils are catered for well in lessons through additional support and suitably planned work that takes into account their individual needs. Teachers generally provide pupils with helpful guidance when marking their work in English. The school undertakes a range of assessment tasks, but information from these is not collated in a way which enables teachers to see at a glance how well pupils are progressing.
48. The leadership and management of English are good. The two subject co-ordinators evaluate the strengths and weaknesses in the subject effectively and have identified appropriate areas for development. There has been good improvement since the last inspection in Years 3 to 6. All the weaknesses identified in the previous inspection report have been fully addressed. Curricular planning has improved, there is now a consistent approach to the teaching of the literacy hour, and teachers now provide pupils with sufficient opportunities for extended writing.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

49. Although there are some good examples of English skills being used and developed in other subjects, mainly in Years 1 and 2, there are insufficient planned opportunities to

develop pupils' language and literacy skills across the curriculum. In many subjects, there is an over-reliance on the use of worksheet activities which limit pupils' written responses to either short phrases or one-word answers and do not give scope for developing pupils' writing skills. Insufficient use is made of information and communication technology to help pupils improve the quality of their writing.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Although almost all pupils achieve the minimum level expected at the end of Year 2, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 is below that of most schools.
- By the end of Year 6, pupils have a good understanding of number, but have difficulty applying their knowledge in practical or problem-solving contexts.
- Although the quality of the teaching is generally satisfactory, teachers do not always provide sufficient challenge, especially for the more able pupils.
- The school has good mechanisms for monitoring provision in mathematics, but does not spend enough time following up areas identified for development.
- Although a lot of assessment takes place, the procedures do not provide a clear picture of pupils' progress or give pupils specific guidance on what they need to do to improve.
- There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to use and develop their mathematical skills across the curriculum.

Commentary

50. The school's provision in mathematics continues to be satisfactory, as at the time of the previous inspection, although comparison of the school's national test results at the end of Years 2 and 6 with other schools is less favourable now than it was then. There is greater consistency in the quality of the teaching than before, but some of the weaknesses outlined in the previous report still remain. Overall, pupils make steady progress and achieve satisfactorily.
51. The school's national test results at the end of Year 2 have fallen over the last six years, in contrast to the national trend which has been of a steady rise in results. In 2004, the school's results were marginally below the national average, but were well below the average for similar schools. Preliminary results from the tests in 2005 indicate a slight improvement. Whilst almost all pupils achieved the minimum level expected for pupils of their age, the proportion of pupils exceeding these expectations and achieving the higher Level 3 was well below average. Inspection findings indicate that standards are average in the current Year 2 and that, overall, pupils in Years 1 and 2 are making satisfactory progress. However, they also indicate that there is not always sufficient challenge, particularly for the more able pupils, a factor which would account for the small proportion of pupils achieving Level 3 in the national tests.
52. Apart from 2000 and 2002, the school's national test results at the end of Year 6 have remained relatively stable. This contrasts with the national trend, which has been one of improvement. Whilst the school's results were well above the national average at the time of the previous inspection, they were only average in 2004 and above average when compared with similar schools. Preliminary results from the tests in 2005 are lower than those achieved in 2004. Inspection findings indicate that standards are average in the current Year 6 and that, overall, pupils are achieving satisfactorily. However, the proportion of pupils who do not achieve the expected level for their age is

greater than at the end of Year 2 and, given previous levels of attainment at the end of Year 2, not enough pupils achieve the higher Level 5.

53. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The teachers have sound knowledge of the curriculum and base their planning on the National Numeracy Strategy. They are well aware of the wide range of abilities within their classes, even when pupils are taught in ability sets, and provide differing tasks for different groups of pupils. Relationships between teachers and pupils are good, and teachers maintain high standards of discipline. The teaching of basic understanding of number is thorough and, by the end of Year 6, most pupils know their number facts and are adept at carrying out quick mental calculations. In some of the lessons observed during the inspection, the teachers were very good at getting pupils to explain how they reached their answers, and they also made good use of resources. In a lesson for pupils in Years 1 and 2, for example, pupils worked in pairs using a fan of coins to work out which coins they would need to make up a given sum. The discussion and practical nature of the task involved all pupils and the use of the coin fans enabled the teacher to see quickly and easily if any pupils were experiencing difficulties.
54. Whilst most of the teaching is sound, and no unsatisfactory lessons were observed during the inspection, there are weaknesses in the teaching, evident in differing degrees in different classes and not all of the time. Teachers' expectations of what the pupils are capable of achieving and the challenge which they provide, particularly for the more able pupils, are not always high enough. Some of the whole-class introductions last too long, with some pupils straining at the leash to get on with their own work. Too many of the tasks given to pupils involve the completion of worksheets which do not help pupils to develop independence of thought or the skill of presenting work carefully. Pupils are not given enough opportunity to apply their mathematical skills in practical or problem-solving contexts, with the result that this aspect of their work is weaker than others.
55. The leadership and management of the subject, shared by two teachers, each with responsibility for a separate part of the school, are satisfactory. The school's 'focus fortnights' provide good opportunities for the co-ordinators to monitor the quality of provision in mathematics through a series of lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with staff and pupils. As a result of the most recent monitoring exercise, the co-ordinator for Years 3 to 6 identified a number of appropriate areas for development. A weakness with the current arrangements, however, is that the follow-up arrangements are not clear, so, although these issues have been communicated to staff, there are no planned opportunities to ascertain how well they have been dealt with and what impact any new initiatives are having on pupils' achievement. A further weakness is the lack of standard procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress, both over the longer term, so that teachers and co-ordinators can gain a clear picture of pupils' progress and an understanding of areas for development, and in the short term, through the marking of pupils' work. Pupils are given little guidance through their marked work as to how they might improve, and little reference is made to the targets which pupils have been set and what progress they have made towards meeting them. A good, recent initiative, however, was an information evening for parents, which took as its focus the way calculation is taught, and which received positive feedback from parents.

Mathematics across the curriculum

56. The planned use and development of mathematical skills across the curriculum is unsatisfactory. Pupils' work shows that there is little development or application of mathematical skills in subjects such as geography and design and technology and, although data-handling is used occasionally in science, pupils' skills in this aspect of mathematics are not developed significantly through such opportunities. Aspects of the

curriculum for information and communication technology which deal with mathematical concepts are not linked in sufficiently well with the mathematics curriculum. As a result, pupils do not get sufficient opportunity to see how their mathematical skills can be applied in practical contexts.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have good subject knowledge.
- Pupils with special educational needs are provided with good support.
- Pupils are not always sufficiently challenged by the work provided and do not have enough opportunity to develop independent learning skills.

Commentary

57. The teachers' assessments of pupils' attainment in science at the end of Year 2 were well above the national average in 2004. Inspection findings indicate that standards are average and that these assessments are over-generous. Pupils' achievement in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection. They have a satisfactory grasp of the concept of answering scientific questions by carrying out investigations.
58. The national test results at the end of Year 6 in 2004 were similar to the national average and were slightly lower than those at the time of the last inspection. In the intervening period, results improved significantly until 2001, after which they have fallen again. Preliminary results from the tests in 2005 are very close to those of the previous year. Inspection findings indicate that pupils' achievement is satisfactory and that standards are average by the end of Year 6. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the 'scientific method' and carry out investigations with accuracy and attention to detail. Most pupils understand the importance of carrying out a 'fair test'.
59. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Most teachers have good subject knowledge and plan a good range of activities, which cover all aspects of the curriculum for science. Teachers make good use of questioning to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding. Lessons are planned to meet the needs of the majority of pupils in the class. Whilst pupils of average ability have work matched to their needs, there is not always enough challenge for the more able pupils. Teachers and teaching assistants provide good support for pupils with special educational needs. Pupils are given opportunities to carry out investigations and experiments, but these are often too structured, with limited opportunities for pupils to devise their own experiments, or to formulate and test their own theories. Whilst most pupils can make predictions on the outcome of investigations, the more complex skills of making inferences and evaluating evidence are less well developed. There is an over-reliance on the completion of worksheets which limit the use of pupils' literacy and creative skills and do not enable pupils to develop their ability to communicate their ideas in a range of different ways. Insufficient use is made of information and technology to support pupils' learning.
60. Leadership and management of science are satisfactory. There are sound procedures for monitoring the provision in science, through which the co-ordinator has identified the need to apply more rigour in the way the school assesses pupils' attainment and progress. He provides good support for other staff.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school's provision for information and communication technology has improved since the previous inspection.
- Pupils respond positively to information and communication technology.
- The subject leadership team has undertaken a number of good initiatives, but does not have a strong enough focus on improving the quality of teaching and pupils' learning.
- Information and communication technology is not yet used widely enough as a tool for learning in all subjects of the curriculum.

Commentary

61. There has been good improvement in the school's provision for information and communication technology since the previous inspection, when it was identified as a key issue for improvement. New resources, the installation of a small computer suite, training for staff and better curricular planning have helped to improve the quality of the teaching and range of opportunities available for the pupils. There are still areas for improvement in this rapidly changing subject, but pupils of all capabilities are now making satisfactory progress throughout the school. Standards are close to those expected at the end of Years 2 and 6. Overall, pupils' achievement is satisfactory.
62. Pupils' skills are strongest in the areas of 'exchanging and sharing information' and 'finding things out'. They are weakest in the area of 'reviewing, modifying and evaluating their work' which requires pupils to use their skills from other subject areas or to apply their knowledge and understanding in different contexts. By the end of Year 6, pupils are competent in finding out information from the Internet, and have a satisfactory range of skills which enable them to set out text and graphics using a word processor or presentation program. However, because of the way the subject is taught and the limited amount of access pupils have to computers, much of the pupils' work is superficial. It is evident that pupils acquire a broad range of skills, but their work folders contain many pieces of work which are either unfinished or which bear little relevance to work in other subjects. There are few examples of substantial pieces of work which pupils have had the time to develop, evaluate and refine.
63. The quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory. Pupils are now receiving regular teaching, which was not the case at the time of the last inspection. Because of the small size of the computer suite, most lessons are conducted with only half a class at a time. Whilst this is a sensible arrangement given the circumstances, it has its drawbacks as lessons are either short to allow groups to rotate, or pupils do not always have a weekly lesson. The teachers manage pupils' behaviour well and pupils' response is often very good, especially given the confines of the small, and often stiflingly hot, computer room. Overall planning for the subject has improved, as the school now follows the local authority's scheme of work, which ensures that pupils are taught a satisfactory range of skills. However, teachers do not always have high enough expectations of what the pupils should achieve in a given time. The school provides two after-school computer clubs, which help those who attend to extend their skills. Occasional special days also provide a significant boost to pupils' learning. For example, pupils in Year 5 recently experienced a day led by a local adviser on using animation software and broadened their skills and understanding of the use of computers as a result.

64. Overall, leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. There are good features, but also some weaknesses. A group of staff meets together regularly to oversee the school's strategy for information and communication technology and has been responsible for many of the improvements which have occurred since the last inspection. Various training initiatives have been organised, and an audit has been taken of the skills of teaching assistants with a view to providing training for them in the future. The school has good arrangements for technical support, good attention is given to health and safety, and appropriate steps have been taken to avoid obvious dangers when using the Internet. The school has undertaken various reviews of its current provision and identified a range of appropriate areas for development. However, there is not a clear enough focus on raising the quality of teaching and pupils' learning. The co-ordinator has undertaken a number of lesson observations, but these have not identified areas for development. Assessment procedures are in place, but they are not used consistently or accurately to identify how teachers might help pupils to improve. They are not robust enough to provide staff with a clear picture of pupils' attainment and progress.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

65. Overall, the use of information and communication technology and the development of pupils' skills across the curriculum are unsatisfactory. Teachers endeavour to teach new skills within the context of another subject, but this does not always happen, and the resulting work rarely forms an integral part of the other subject. Scrutiny of pupils' work in subjects such as science, geography and history shows very little use of new technology.

HUMANITIES

66. The organisation of the timetable during the week of the inspection provided little opportunity to observe direct teaching in either **history** or **geography** and no judgement has been made about the overall provision and the quality of teaching and learning in these subjects. One history lesson was observed, discussions were held with subject co-ordinators and pupils, and pupils' work was scrutinised. As St Bartholomew's is a voluntary aided school, provision in **religious education** is inspected and reported on separately by a diocesan inspector.
67. Standards in both **geography** and **history** are broadly in line with those expected by the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils' work indicates that they make satisfactory progress and develop an appropriate range of skills. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have a satisfactory knowledge of the local area and, during the inspection, were particularly keen to talk about their knowledge of routes, maps and map-reading skills. However, the presentation of their work is often untidy.
68. The curriculum for geography and history is broad, but its planning lacks imagination and creativity. Teachers rely too heavily on the use of unchallenging and uninspiring worksheets, which limit the opportunities for pupils, particularly the more able, to exercise their independence when recording, presenting or researching work in relation to the topics studied. Not enough use is made of the potential of these two subjects for pupils to use and develop basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are unsatisfactory, although the subject leader who has had the responsibility for only one year has plans to improve them. Pupils' experiences in both subjects are enriched through a good range of visits and visitors to the school.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

69. This area of the curriculum comprises art and design, design and technology, music and physical education. Full subject reports are provided for all of these subjects except physical education, in which no lessons were observed during the inspection. Discussions were held with the co-ordinators for each subject and with pupils, and work made available by the school and work on display was scrutinised. No overall judgements have been made in respect of physical education.
70. **Physical education** is currently one of the school's priorities for development. The school has provided training for staff and undertaken a variety of initiatives to improve provision in this area, particularly with regard to raising the profile of games skills. Discussions with pupils and teachers and the scrutiny of teachers' planning indicate that these initiatives have brought about improvement and that all aspects of the subject are now taught effectively. A good range of sporting extra-curricular activities is available for pupils in Years 5 and 6, but few such opportunities are available for younger pupils.

Art and design

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good leadership has resulted in good improvement in art and design since the previous inspection, when the subject was highlighted as an area for development.
- Pupils achieve well and attain above average standards in art and design by the end of Years 2 and 6.
- Extra-curricular and enrichment activities contribute significantly to pupils' learning in the subject.

Commentary

71. There has been good improvement in art and design since the previous inspection, when there were insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop and apply their imaginative skills. This weakness has been fully addressed, and pupils now have the opportunity to experience and express themselves imaginatively using a good range of media and techniques. This improvement can be attributed to the good leadership and management of the subject co-ordinator, who has raised the profile of art and design across the school by developing effective initiatives such as whole-school art weeks, when professional artists work alongside pupils and teachers in order to develop pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills and by organising art clubs. These initiatives have helped to raise standards significantly. Pupils achieve well and standards are above average at the end of Years 2 and 6. Across the school, pupils show good attention to form, line, pattern and colour, and older pupils use colour and texture very imaginatively in abstract design.
72. All aspects of the subject are covered effectively, and teachers encourage pupils to experience and explore a good range of media and techniques such as watercolour, pastels, oils, textiles, sculpture and batik. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection, but evidence gathered from discussions with both teachers and pupils and from the scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning indicates that the quality of teaching and learning in art and design is good. Resources for the subject are good, and well-planned enrichment activities, such as visiting artists and visits to local art galleries, support pupils' learning in the subject very effectively.

Design and technology

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teachers have secure subject knowledge.
- Sometimes, teachers are too prescriptive and provide insufficient challenge in what they ask pupils to do.

Commentary

73. Pupils' achievement in design and technology is satisfactory and standards are in line with age-related expectations by the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils work with a variety of materials and show good attention to quality of finish and function when proceeding with a design brief.
74. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Satisfactory curricular guidelines support teachers' planning. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and are fully aware of health and safety issues. They prepare and use resources effectively to support pupils' learning in the subject. All aspects of the curriculum are taught effectively and, from an early age, pupils make simple annotated plans of models they intend to construct. Sometimes, there is insufficient challenge in the activities provided. The teachers are often too prescriptive and do not allow pupils to make their own decisions about how to proceed with their work, thereby missing opportunities to help pupils develop specific problem-solving skills and greater independence.
75. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The subject is monitored effectively through lesson observations and the scrutiny of pupils' work. The evidence presented by the school during this inspection suggests that pupils have fewer opportunities to engage in design and technology related activities than at the time of the previous inspection.

Music

Provision in music is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well and reach above average standards by the end of Years 2 and 6.
- Extra-curricular activities, peripatetic tuition and opportunities for pupils to perform in front of others, contribute significantly to pupils' achievement.
- The subject is led well by a knowledgeable and enthusiastic co-ordinator who provides a good role model for other staff.

Commentary

76. Music continues to be a strength of the curriculum, as it was at the time of the previous inspection. Standards in music are above average at the end of Years 2 and 6, and pupils achieve well. The subject co-ordinator's good leadership and management and her very good teaching contribute significantly to pupils' achievement. Music has a high profile across the school, and teachers provide pupils with a good range of opportunities to perform in many different situations, such as entertaining senior citizens within the local community, at school concerts and singing at special services at the church. The school makes very good use of the local education authority's music service. This enables pupils to learn how to play a range of instruments and pupils reach high standards when they have specialist teaching.

77. Composing and performing aspects of the subject are taught well from an early age. For example, in a lesson in Years 1 and 2, pupils read and followed simple notation on a music timeline very well in order to play their percussion instruments at the appropriate time. By the end of Year 6, pupils read scores of music and notation well, and they perform confidently in front of an audience. Attainment in singing is in line with age-related expectations by the end of Year 2 and above average by the end of Year 6. Pupils show both enthusiasm and obvious enjoyment when engaged in singing activities, and their attention to phrasing, pitch, tempo and musical expression is good.
78. The co-ordinator has high levels of subject knowledge and leads by example very effectively. She monitors standards, teaching and learning in the subject effectively and, if appropriate, takes action through well-organised training and guidance in order to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Extra-curricular activities, such as choir, orchestra and recorder club, also contribute significantly to pupils' learning in the subject.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

79. Provision in personal, social and health education and citizenship was sampled, and no judgements have been made on overall provision, standards and pupils' achievement. Discussions were held with staff and pupils and one personal, social and health education lesson was observed.
80. The school has implemented national initiatives very effectively to develop and support pupils' learning about health matters. For example, the school has worked hard to devise and implement an effective health education policy in order to obtain the 'Healthy Schools Award'. Both the school and class councils are very effective in developing pupils' awareness of citizenship and what it means to live within a community. Pupils' personal and social skills are developed well through personal, social and health education lessons. From the limited evidence available, the quality of teaching and learning appears to be good. Teachers create a climate in which serious issues can be discussed openly and maturely by pupils. The leadership and management of this area of the curriculum are good. The co-ordinator has implemented an effective policy and has worked hard to involve the school in initiatives that support pupils' learning.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	4
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
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)	3
Attendance	3
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	5
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
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	4
The governance of the school	3
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).