

# INSPECTION REPORT

**ST BENEDICT'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Atherstone

LEA area: Warwickshire

Unique reference number: 125705

Headteacher: Mrs E J Dyas

Lead inspector: Ms B Matusiak-Varley

Dates of inspection: 24<sup>th</sup> - 26<sup>th</sup> January 2005

Inspection number: 267751

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:	148
School address:	Church Walk Atherstone Warwickshire
Postcode:	CV9 1PS
Telephone number:	(01827) 712 320
Fax number:	(01827) 714 078
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Dawn Ford
Date of previous inspection:	23 <sup>rd</sup> November 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St Benedict's Catholic Primary School is situated in Atherstone, North Warwickshire. It is a small school with 148 pupils on roll. The vast majority are white Caucasian. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals, at 12.6 per cent, is broadly average. There are no pupils who have English as an additional language. The percentage having special educational needs, at 17.2 per cent, is broadly in line with the national average. Their needs are largely associated with moderate learning difficulties. There are no pupils with statements of special educational needs. Attainment on entry to the school is average, but is below average in early reading and writing skills. The school serves Atherstone and the surrounding ex-mining villages of North Warwickshire, but 47 per cent of pupils travel by bus from outlying rural villages. This affects the range of extra-curricular provision. The school received a School Achievement Award in 2003 and is involved in a three-year arts project called "Let's Create".

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
19938	B Matusiak-Varley	Lead inspector	Science Art and design Music Provision for pupils with English as an additional language
11084	J Hughes	Lay inspector	
11642	C Parkinson	Team inspector	Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage English Geography History Provision for pupils with special educational needs
32845	P Rushforth	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Design and technology Physical education

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# PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

## OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school with very good features. It is well placed to become a very good school. Pupils receive a good education. Teaching is good overall with very good features. Standards are well above national averages in English, mathematics and science, and pupils' achievements in these subjects are very good. The school is very well led and managed by a highly experienced and dedicated headteacher. Governance is very good. The school provides good value for money.

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

- Standards are well above national averages in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, and pupils' achievements are very good.
- Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is very good.
- Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are below national expectations in Year 6, and pupils' achievements are unsatisfactory.
- Pupils love coming to school; they are very well behaved and have very good attitudes to learning owing to the very good provision made for their spiritual, moral, cultural and social development.
- The learning opportunities offered are good. All pupils have full access to the curriculum.
- Pupils are very well cared for by a hard working and dedicated staff.
- The partnership with parents and the community is very good and parents are seen as true partners in pupils' learning.
- Governors perform their duties very well and systems for self-evaluation are very good.

Improvement since the last inspection of 1998 has been good. Standards have improved, especially in English, mathematics and science, but standards in ICT by the end of Year 6 are below expectations. Teaching and learning have improved and there is a higher percentage of very good teaching. Assessment procedures in English and mathematics have improved and are now good.

## STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

**Pupils' achievements are good overall in relation to their prior attainment.** Attainment on entry to the school is very variable but is average overall in all areas of learning except early reading and writing skills, which are just below average. On entry to Year 1 nearly all of the pupils have exceeded the expected standards, and their achievements are very good. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards in speaking, listening, reading, writing,

mathematics and science are well above average, and pupils' achievements are very good. In most other subjects achievement is good and standards are above those expected nationally of seven- and eleven-year-olds. In ICT, pupils attain average standards by the end of Year 2 and their achievements are satisfactory. However, by the end of Year 6, standards are below those expected nationally, and pupils' achievements over time are unsatisfactory but improving. This is largely attributable to the fact that ICT resources have only just come on stream as the school has committed its resources to raising standards in English and mathematics, which it has done very successfully. The school is working very hard to address this issue. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Very good provision is made for pupils' spiritual, moral, cultural and social development, and they have very good attitudes to learning and behave very well. Attendance rates are very high and pupils love coming to school.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The overall quality of education, including the teaching provided by the school, is good with very good features.** Teaching and learning ensure that pupils' overall progress throughout the school is very good. The school is working hard at addressing the issue of raising standards in ICT and using ICT across the curriculum which, at present, is in the early stages of development owing to the very recent implementation of ICT resources. Teaching is based on good assessment of pupils' differing needs, especially in English and mathematics. The curriculum is enhanced by a good range of visits and visitors to the school. The good quality of care for pupils and the very good partnership with parents and the community contribute significantly to pupils' learning.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**The leadership and management of the school are very good.** The headteacher is a very experienced and caring person who ensures that all pupils are well prepared for their next steps of education. She is well supported by her deputy headteacher and senior management team. Governors fulfil their duties very well; they provide very good support and challenge, and ensure that all statutory requirements are met.

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

Parents and pupils are rightly very proud of the school and value the hard work put in by the teachers. They are consulted on all aspects of school life.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Raise standards and pupils' achievements in ICT throughout the school.

# PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

## STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS

Overall, pupils' achievements are good. Standards are well above average in English, mathematics and science, and pupils' achievements are very good in these subjects. In all other subjects except design and technology and ICT, pupils' achievements are good and standards are above those expected nationally.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievements are very good in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and standards are well above national average.
- Pupils achieve well throughout the school in geography, history, art and design and music, and standards are above those expected nationally by the end of Year 6.
- In ICT, standards at the end of Year 6 are below the national expectations for eleven-year-olds, and pupils' achievements are unsatisfactory.

#### Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	18.6 (18.2)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	16.6 (17.1)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	18.0 (18.8)	16.2 (16.3)

*There were 18 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.9 (28.8)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	29.8 (29.5)	27.0 (26.8)
science	31.7 (30.3)	28.6 (28.6)

*There were 28 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

1. The 2004 national test results and teacher assessments show that, by the end of Year 2, standards in writing and mathematics were well above the national average, and in reading and science they were in the top five per cent. By the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science, standards were also well above average. In science, standards were in the top five per cent nationally. In comparison with similar schools there was a similar picture; in Years 3 to 6 in English, standards were well above average, and in mathematics and science, standards were in the top five per cent nationally. The school has consistently met its targets, and standards have improved every year. In Years 2 and 6 the percentage of pupils attaining the higher levels has



been above the national average, especially in science in Year 6. There are no marked gender or ethnic differences in attainment.

2. There have been many contributory factors to raising standards:
  - The very good leadership and management of the headteacher, deputy headteacher and governing body have ensured that systems for self-evaluation are very rigorous; any area of underachievement has been identified and resources have been targeted appropriately.
  - Pupils are taught in their prospective year groups for English and mathematics and support staff have been targeted appropriately; this has helped raise standards.
  - Assessment data has been gathered systematically and used to raise standards.
  - Teaching has been monitored very effectively by the headteacher. Any perceived weaknesses have been identified and training has been introduced.
  - Pupils' performance has been rigorously monitored.
  - Very effective teachers' planning has taken into account the different groups of pupils, and tasks set have been matched to both their needs and interest levels.
  - Staff, including supply and support teachers, have had high expectations of their pupils and challenged them to achieve their best.
  - Parents have been very supportive of homework and have worked as true partners in their children's learning.
  - The curriculum has been planned very well, with a good range of visits and visitors, and this has appealed to the pupils.
  - Staff have worked hard at developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects and this is helping to raise standards.
  - The very strong Christian ethos, respecting each individual pupil, has permeated all aspects of school life and pupils know that they can always ask for help.
  - The very good provision for all pupils with special educational needs has enabled them to achieve well.
3. Pupils with special educational needs achieve as well as other pupils because of the good use of assessment and very good teaching.
4. The school has worked hard at developing standards in the foundation subjects. They are above those expected nationally by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 in geography, history, art and design and music, and pupils' achievements are good. In design and technology, standards broadly meet the national expectations for seven- and eleven-year-olds, and pupils' achievements are satisfactory. In physical education a limited number of lessons were seen and so it is not possible to make a secure judgment on overall standards. In ICT, by the end of Year 2, standards meet the national expectations for seven-year-olds, and pupils' achievements are satisfactory. In Year 6, standards are below average and over time pupils' achievements are unsatisfactory. Several examples of good achievement were seen during the week of the inspection however, recently purchased laptops have not yet been integrated into all aspects of curriculum planning. Teachers are trying very hard to use ICT to support learning, and good plans have been put in place, but these have not had sufficient time to impact fully on pupils' learning, and are not yet being used sufficiently to help pupils in other subjects.

## **PUPILS' ATTITUDES, VALUES AND OTHER PERSONAL QUALITIES**

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Provision for their personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is very good. Attendance is well above the national average.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The very positive ethos promotes first-class relationships throughout the school.
- This is a strikingly calm and purposeful community.
- Pupils care for each other very well and develop impressive value systems.
- Attendance rates are high.

### **Commentary**

5. These are delightful children who really enjoy school. Pupils of all ages say they like school and feel well supported here. They know they can talk to any adults about problems and that their opinions are valued by staff. Pupils listen attentively in lessons and try really hard to complete the tasks set for them. Pupils show high levels of self-confidence as they chat happily to visitors, telling them about their school and particular interests. Even the youngest children bustle into class at the start of the day with a happy wave to their parents, eager to immerse themselves in the familiar routines. Class teachers take time to listen to pupils and this helps them settle into the easy camaraderie that characterises this school.
6. Pupils' behaviour is of a very high order and is very good. Teachers create a calm environment that is nonetheless visually dynamic, capturing pupils' imaginations and sparking their interest. Eye-catching wall hangings and glittering displays of artwork bring the beauty of the natural world into classrooms for pupils to enjoy as they work and play. Pictures and text are carefully mounted and highly valued by staff. Pupils demonstrate how comfortable they are with talking about their emotions – they are able to describe quite complex feelings such as courage and sadness. Pupils understand the simple school rules and follow them unerringly. Older pupils provide consistent role models for their younger friends; there is little room here for silliness or time-wasting. Pupils are unfailingly polite in lessons and around the school and are always happy to help others. Pupils with special educational needs behave very well and steadily gain the confidence to tackle work of increasing difficulty as they go through the school. There was one exclusion from school in the preceding academic year. Incidents of inappropriate behaviour are rare and the school speedily addresses them.
7. The school pays attention to each aspect of pupils' personal development. A visitor does not have to be in school for long to appreciate the sense of well-being that emanates directly from the headteacher to every corner of the school. Close consideration is given to pupils' emotional development, not least through regular acts of collective worship. These are special occasions where pupils sing sweetly and pray reverently. Adults leading the worship ensure that pupils understand how events in their everyday lives are closely intertwined with their spiritual selves.
8. The school is fully committed to inclusion. It is good at preparing its pupils for the next stages of schooling and their future lives. They develop good team-building skills, very good manners, a love of learning and a caring attitude to the people around them.

9. Ample opportunities exist for pupils to learn what it means to live in a fair and just society. The school council makes a strong contribution to daily life, and the oldest pupils represent the younger children well. Staff regularly reward good behaviour and effort through a system of house points and stars, and in special celebration assemblies. Staff act as excellent role models for pupils, treating everyone with sensitivity and respect. There are many thoughtful touches in this school that set it apart. When children first join the school, they each place a pebble in the 'Friendship Pool' that shimmers in the corridor. These pebbles act as a tangible reminder to the school community of their newest arrivals and confirm the special place they occupy. Older pupils are paired as 'Prayer Friends' with the new arrivals. They help them to settle into school, spend free time with them and guide them during worship. Such 'homely' touches cement the various individuals in this school into a real family – and their enjoyment of each other's company and successes shines through.
10. Pupils' cultural development benefits enormously from the interest shown by staff, not only in their own cultural heritage but also in those of far-flung cultures. Pupils enjoy a very good grasp of local traditions and visit many places of interest. Staff invite a range of visitors into school to extend pupils' knowledge of their own heritage. Although this is a mono-ethnic community, staff go to great lengths to bring pupils into contact with a variety of multicultural experiences. A recent multicultural week allowed pupils to immerse themselves in a culture for five days. They visited religious buildings, studied different beliefs and sampled the food, art, drama and music associated with Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism. This helped them to appreciate differences in languages and lifestyles across the world. Staff 'go the extra mile' for their pupils – taking pains to maintain contacts with a multi-ethnic school and to invite its pupils into school for the day so that everyone involved could compare lifestyles and beliefs.

## Attendance

### *Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)*

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.2	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.*

11. Attendance rates are well above average, showing that pupils really enjoy coming to school and that parents value the education it provides. There is no unauthorised absence. Pupils arrive at school on time and there is a prompt start to the day.

## Exclusions

### *Ethnic background of pupils*

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British

### *Exclusions in the last school year*

Number of pupils on roll	Number of fixed-period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
118	1	0

White – any other White background	4	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	1	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	3	0	0

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

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is good, with very good features. Teaching, learning and assessment are good overall. The curriculum is well planned and enriched by visits and visitors. Pupils are very well cared for by a dedicated staff and receive very good support and guidance. They are consulted on all aspects of school life. The school has very good links with parents and the community. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

### TEACHING AND LEARNING

The quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is good overall, with very good features, and has improved significantly since the previous inspection as a result of the very good monitoring of teaching and learning by the headteacher and the effective implementation of performance management. Assessment procedures are good and used well to move pupils on in their learning.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are very good in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2, and basic skills are taught very well.
- Teaching is good, with very good features in Years 3 to 6 and in English, mathematics and science.
- Relationships between pupils and staff are excellent.
- The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Assessment procedures are good in English and mathematics and are used well to target all the different groups of pupils.
- In writing the use of target setting is particularly impressive.
- The teaching of ICT in Years 3 to 6 has weaknesses which staff are working very hard to overcome.
- Assessment procedures in ICT, science and foundation subjects, whilst satisfactory overall, are not yet sufficiently well developed but are being addressed.
- Support staff are not effectively deployed during the introduction of lessons.

#### Commentary

##### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 33 lessons*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1 (3%)	14 (42%)	15 (45%)	3 (9%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

- Teaching is very good in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 because it is rigorous, methodical and fun. Teachers burst with enthusiasm and are very attentive

to their pupils' needs. In a very good science lesson in Year 2, pupils had great fun when learning about fair testing. The class teacher took them outside and practised races with some pupils running free and others running with their legs tied. They were eager to explain why the race was not fair. In the Foundation Stage very good explanations are given at all times and very secure classroom routines are established. The class teacher's lively disposition is underpinned by her very good planning of the curriculum, where pupils are given a range of opportunities to learn by using their senses. For example, in a very good lesson on repeated patterns, the class teacher used time very effectively to enable the children to quickly identify patterns of teddy bear hats. The insistence on collaborative learning enables all children to develop their social skills; as a result, learning is effective and fun, with all groups of children achieving very well in relation to their prior attainment.

13. The teaching of ICT, whilst satisfactory during the week of the inspection, is unsatisfactory over time because teachers are not integrating it into all subjects and this slows down pupils' rates of progress. Whilst most of the equipment purchased is fairly new and plans are in place for its development, teachers are not yet ensuring that pupils are using ICT as an active tool for learning. Several examples of good use of ICT were seen in Years 6, 5 and 3. The school is fully aware of the need to develop this aspect of teaching and learning. Much has been done to address the issues identified in the previous report, and teachers' subject knowledge has improved.
14. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs and of the higher attainers is good. Pupils are given tasks matched to their needs and are challenged effectively. They benefit from work in the small year groups for core subjects and from the additional help they receive in very small groups which addresses their specific difficulties. They make especially good progress in voicing their ideas in small groups because the audience has time to listen and comment. Their individual education plans are well used in planning and they make good progress. Teachers have very good subject knowledge, especially when teaching English, mathematics and science, with particular strengths in the teaching of reading, writing and number.
15. The teaching of English, mathematics and science is very good. In other subjects seen (foundation subjects) teaching is at least good because teachers have very good subject knowledge which they impart well to their pupils. In an excellent mathematics lesson seen in Year 5 the class teacher used ICT expertly to model calculations. The excellent range of questioning enabled the teacher to gauge the levels of pupils' responses. By the end of the lesson nearly three quarters were able to calculate  $\frac{3}{8}$  of two litres. The excellent pace and delivery of knowledge, coupled with the class teacher's relentless focus on learning, ensured that pupils were engrossed in the subject.
16. Pupils learn well because their capacity to work independently and collaboratively is very good. This is largely due to good use made of assessment, thorough marking and pupils' good understanding of how they can improve the quality of their work. In writing, the use of target setting is particularly impressive. Throughout the school, pupils are aware of what they need to do to improve the quality of their work.
17. Support staff make a valid contribution to pupils' learning, but when teachers give explanations at the beginning of lessons they are not used productively; for example, to target lower-achieving pupils. Teachers now make learning objectives clear to their

pupils, an issue identified in the previous inspection, and relationships have improved from being good to excellent.

18. Assessment procedures are good in English and mathematics; they are satisfactory in ICT, science and foundation subjects but do not identify the progressive development of subject-specific skills, especially in foundation subjects. This is an area that the school has identified in its very good procedures for self-evaluation.

## **THE CURRICULUM**

The curriculum is good. It is enriched by a good range of visits, visitors and extra-curricular activities. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory and support pupils' learning well.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The curriculum is well planned.
- The school prepares its pupils well for the next stages of their education and for life-long learning.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and they are looked after well.
- A good range of extra-curricular activities enriches the curriculum and increases enthusiasm for learning.
- Provision for personal, social and health education and citizenship is good.
- The school makes generally satisfactory use of ICT to support learning in literacy and numeracy.

### **Commentary**

19. The curriculum is good. It is well planned, broad and balanced and meets statutory requirements. The school is working very hard at ensuring that pupils are catching up on using their ICT skills across the curriculum. With good planning of the curriculum, pupils are well prepared for the next steps of education.
20. The work is well matched to the differing abilities of pupils and they all make good progress as a result. Satisfactory use is made of ICT to support learning in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2. The recent investment in more laptop computers has enabled pupils to use them for independent research, word processing and controlling other machines. The older pupils have had insufficient access to these computers to develop the full range of skills expected at this level. This has been largely due to the fact that the school had targeted its resources at raising standards in English and mathematics, which it has done very successfully. Overall, the use of ICT is unsatisfactory, but the school is working hard to address the issue.
21. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Their specific needs are carefully assessed. Each pupil has a clear individual education plan which sets precise targets. There is very good communication with parents which ensures that they are able to contribute to their children's action plans and support their learning.
22. The school uses expertise from outside the school very well. There is a very good programme of visits out and visitors into school that enhances the quality of what is taught and captures the pupils' interest and enthusiasm. For example, a company specialising in design and technology visits the school to help pupils in Year 6 to

develop skills. A representative of a local hockey club visits the school to coach pupils in Years 5 and 6.

23. Every other year 30 pupils enjoy a residential experience to Manor Adventure in Shropshire. The pupils experienced a variety of activities and developed independence and team-building skills within a secure environment and with caring staff. A good range of extra-curricular clubs and activities adds to the richness of the curriculum, contributes to pupils' overall enjoyment of school and aids their social development. The range of sporting activities provided after school is satisfactory and demonstrates the hard work and commitment of teaching staff in giving their time so freely.
24. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory overall and meet the needs of the curriculum. The school buildings are well decorated, well cared for and very clean. The hall is quite small and reduces the range of activities that can take place in physical education. The school has a good number of support staff to help deliver the curriculum to all pupils. They have a positive impact on standards throughout the school.
25. Improvement since the last inspection has been good because of the very good leadership of the headteacher and generally good subject management by the co-ordinators. Schemes of work have been put in place and assessment procedures are now good overall.

## **CARE, GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT**

There is very good provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. Staff provide very good support, advice and guidance. The school is very good at involving pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Adults nurture excellent relationships with pupils, identifying and meeting their individual needs.
- Staff pay very close attention to pupils' well-being.
- Pupils are encouraged to make their opinions known on all aspects of school life.

### **Commentary**

26. Parents know that this is a very caring school. From the time their children first walk through the doors and are greeted by the charismatic reception teacher, children know they are among friends. Staff constantly ensure that they feel secure and happy in school and this helps pupils to feel secure in their learning. There are clear procedures for all aspects of health and safety, and staff are familiar with emergency procedures. The designated member of staff with responsibility for child protection is conscientious and ably supported by the headteacher. Risk assessments are carried out as needed and all staff are most vigilant about health and safety in their classrooms. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, mainly through interesting personal, social, health and citizenship education. Representatives from outside agencies also support their personal development and there are links with initiatives such as 'Crucial Crew'. This enables pupils to develop their confidence skills.

27. Staff make effective use of outside agencies to meet the needs of individual pupils. First-class relationships allow class teachers, support assistants and lunchtime staff to work well together. This ensures that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are well supported and make good progress.
28. The school makes certain that pupils settle quickly when they first arrive. Parents and pupils make the most of home visits and presentations from the headteacher and staff. Lunchtime supervisors establish equally strong relationships with pupils, taking care of their needs in the playground and making sure the 'Friendship Stop' in the playground for Reception and Years 1 and 2 is used effectively.
29. Pupils say that teachers want to know how they feel about all aspects of school life. Feedback is channelled through the school council. This meets regularly and is run by Year 6 pupils. As these older pupils have such close relationships with the younger ones they are 'tuned in' to their feelings and have little difficulty in representing them at council meetings. The 'Healthy Tuck Shop' started as a school-council initiative in conjunction with a local-authority drive to improve pupils' diets. Pupils enjoy playing a part in selling the food with the cook at break time and helping lonely or upset pupils who signal their need for attention at the playground 'Friendship Stop', another pupil-led initiative.

## **PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS, OTHER SCHOOLS AND THE COMMUNITY**

The school maintains very good links with parents and the community. There are good links with other schools.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Relations between parents and the school are highly effective.
- The school plays a central role in the local community.
- Positive collaboration between local schools and colleges enriches pupils' experiences.

### **Commentary**

30. Parents are very supportive of the school and had only positive things to report at the pre-inspection meeting. They particularly appreciate the quality of care, the high expectations of pupils shown by staff and the approachability of everyone working in school. This leads to excellent working relationships and a high level of trust. They feel that the school is well led and managed. The school secretary is a welcoming public face; she provides a very good link between parents, pupils and staff. The headteacher firmly believes that parents should come to her with minor concerns so that a rapid solution can be reached and problems do not escalate. This philosophy works very well and parents know that their concerns are taken seriously. Parents hear their children read regularly, supervise homework and eagerly attend workshops given by the school. This has a positive effect on standards attained by the pupils.
31. The prospectus, the governors' annual report to parents, the welcome booklet and regular newsletters are detailed and give parents a good overview of what happens in school. In addition the individual progress reports sent to parents each summer are full of evaluative comments that really help them to understand what their children can do. They also contain clear targets for what pupils need to do to improve. Parents of



pupils with special educational needs are closely involved in their reviews and this helps them to offer effective support at home. Parents support the school as it engrains good habits in pupils. They make sure that pupils complete homework and regularly communicate with the school through the home-school diaries. Many parents attend school celebrations and events and make a strong financial contribution through a number of fundraising initiatives. They are also keen to be involved in the spiritual activities of the school such as Masses and confirmations. The termly guidance from the school on topics and homework keeps parents up to date and the beautifully-presented display boards encourage them to stop and look.

32. The school values its standing in the local community and tries to involve pupils in as many activities as possible. There are strong links with the local priest, who plays a strong part in the life of the school, providing guidance and support. Soup lunches raise funds for a village in Africa, for example. These events, coupled with the many visitors into school and trips out, help pupils to experience at first hand a variety of social settings. They also gain much positive feedback and local appreciation for their involvement. The headteacher is also quick to make the most of any business links to improve school resources – the new block was partly funded with the help of a local logistics company and, as a result, resources have improved.
33. Staff establish a number of effective links with other schools and colleges which extend pupils' curriculum opportunities. For instance, effective links between the headteacher and other colleagues in the local cluster ensure that the school benefits from the expertise of others. Effective links with the main feeder secondary school help pupils when they transfer to the next stage of their education, as they are familiar with their new surroundings and with some staff and look forward to starting secondary school.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership and management of the school are very good overall. The leadership of the headteacher is very good. Governance is very good. The leadership and management of key staff are good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher provides an excellent role model for all staff and pupils in the caring way in which she deals with the whole-school community.
- The headteacher and senior leaders have very high aspirations for the school which are translated into a very clear and persistent focus on pupils' achievement.
- Strategic planning is good, a very clear educational direction has been established and financial management is good.
- Performance management is good and teaching and learning have been monitored very well by the headteacher.
- The leadership and planning of the curriculum are good.
- Co-ordinators, whilst not yet monitoring teaching and learning in all subjects, lead their subjects well, carry out effective audits and ensure that priorities are appropriately resourced.

### **Commentary**

34. The headteacher provides an excellent role model for all staff and is a very good leader. She is kind, passionate about the achievement of the pupils, and determined that they and her staff achieve the highest standards possible. She has a strong conviction that the needs of the pupils should be at the centre of school improvement and this is evident throughout the school. She has a profoundly positive influence upon the caring ethos of the school. The quality of her work is recognised in her role as a consultant headteacher to other schools in the area.
35. The very good leadership and management of the headteacher and governing body, as identified in the previous inspection, have improved and been instrumental in raising standards.
36. Subject co-ordinators fulfil their duties well. They do not yet monitor teaching in the school but, through annual audits and discussion with colleagues, they are able to accurately determine what the school needs to do to improve. School self-evaluation is very good, thorough and precise. Teaching staff discuss priorities for the School Improvement Plan annually after a curriculum audit has taken place. The headteacher monitors teaching and learning very well and performance management is implemented effectively to raise standards. This is exemplified by the way in which ICT has been identified as a continuing area for development, and ICT forms an important element of all teachers' improvement objectives. Leadership and management of special educational needs are very good. The co-ordinator for pupils with special educational needs keeps a close eye on all of them and ensures that their progress is monitored and their needs are identified and catered for. Documentation is accurate, up to date and useful.
37. Governors have a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school because the headteacher provides them with very good information. There is a close and effective working relationship between governors and the headteacher, who provides them with very detailed information about the school's development. Governors ensure that all statutory requirements are met and, through their very good knowledge of the school's self-evaluation and the quality of their involvement with all aspects of school life, they have a significant influence on the school's development. They have a good grasp of the school's financial situation, its needs and its priorities, and play a highly influential role in this area. They are very supportive of the headteacher, apply the principles of best value to all purchases and compare standards with those attained by similar schools.
38. The headteacher's evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses is very good. Teachers' targets for improvement, as identified in the performance management systems, reflect the needs of the school very effectively so that the whole staff is working towards the overall goals of raising standards, and good progress is made. Strategic planning is based on the school's very good self-evaluation, the senior leader's own clear vision, and the emphasis on high-quality education. This is reflected in the broad and well-planned curriculum, to which all pupils have very good access.

## Financial information

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

Income and expenditure (£)	Balances (£)
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Total income	388,581
Total expenditure	397,917
Expenditure per pupil	2,594

Balance from previous year	43,379
Balance carried forward to the next year	34,043*

\* *This large carry over figure is committed to developing staffing and ICT*

39. The school's financial planning is very good. It is based on careful analysis of spending, high-quality self-evaluation and well-founded projections. The headteacher leads financial management very well and works closely with the school's governors, who are knowledgeable, supportive and well aware of the school's financial situation. All documentation is clear, up to date and accessible, and the school's administrator ensures that day-to-day office management runs smoothly. The efficient administrator always has a friendly and welcoming smile for parents, pupils and visitors.

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

### AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

40. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is very good and is a strength of the school. Teaching, learning, leadership and management are all very good. Very good assessment procedures are linked to the nationally recognised Foundation Profile and are used well. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.
41. Children enter the Reception classes in the September of the year in which they are five and, at the time of the inspection, there were 23 on roll. Most have previously attended local playgroups.
42. The school's assessments when children enter the Reception class indicate that attainment is average in personal, social and emotional development, speaking, listening, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, and physical and creative development. However, attainment in early reading and writing skills is just below average. Induction procedures are very good and children settle into school quickly. Parents are very happy with the way children are introduced to the school and the continuing support they receive. Links with parents are very well maintained through the work children take home, opportunities for comment and the good communications maintained with staff in the Foundation Stage.
43. All groups of children achieve well and will exceed the expected standards by the time they are five.
44. Curriculum planning is very good. Activities are wide ranging and ensure that children have the experiences and opportunities they need to practise new skills and develop new knowledge. This ensures that they make very good progress and that their achievement is good. Very good assessment procedures are kept and used very well to plan what children will learn next and to keep parents informed.
45. The quality of teaching and learning is very good, particularly in English and in mathematical, personal, social and emotional development. Teaching is communicative, lively and very well planned. Children know what is expected of them and adults set high standards, communicate well and are consistent in all they do. However, at times when explanations are given at the start of lessons, support staff are not always used effectively.
46. Accommodation is satisfactory. The classroom is small and well kept, but the outside play area provides many good learning opportunities. Resources are good. Books, paint and other equipment are of high quality and well stored and used.
47. No judgement can be made on the provision for **physical development** as no lessons were seen, but children were observed during playtime sessions and they are well co-ordinated, have a sense of space and achieve very well. They have many good opportunities for movement and to develop their physical skills through cutting and sticking, handling small apparatus, threading small beads and working with fine paintbrushes. It is very likely that they will exceed the expected standards on entry to

Year 1. There is a good-sized, well-used outside area where children work and play frequently each day. They are encouraged to move about during lessons and to be active.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Staff provide very good role models.
- Many activities are provided to develop relationships, consideration and personal independence.

### **Commentary**

48. Most children are likely to exceed the standards expected by the time they are ready for Year 1. Teaching and learning are very good and children's achievements are very good. The care given to all aspects of school life, and particularly care of others, encourages children to be responsible. They have older "prayer friends" who look after them during collective worship and help them to behave well. They are taught to join in together during activities and to be aware of each other's contribution, and as a result they work well in groups. They make very good progress in practical skills and independence; for example, putting on their coats and washing their hands. The very consistent management and caring atmosphere in the class give children the confidence to try things for themselves.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is very lively and well planned.
- Resources are used well to encourage learning.
- Opportunities for speaking and listening are well promoted in other areas of learning.
- Support staff could be used more effectively during the beginning of lessons.

### **Commentary**

49. When children enter the Reception class they exhibit a wide range of ability in speaking and listening from above to below average. Standards are average in language structure and vocabulary overall when children enter, but they are likely to exceed the expected standards when they come to the end of the Foundation Stage. Teaching and learning are very good and children's achievements are very good. They respond eagerly to the very good teaching of speaking and listening skills, and the teacher's clear modelling of language is particularly effective as it helps them to remember. Adults listen carefully to children, who in turn pay a lot of attention to adults and each other. However, support staff could be used more effectively during the beginning of lessons to target small groups of children requiring extra support. Children are eager to learn and throw themselves into taking part in stories and other activities. They are keen to answer questions and are beginning to ask their own. They are beginning to recognise individual letters such as 'd' and 't' and to look at text carefully. Resources are used well to support learning. The management of homework, and in particular reading, is very good and involves parents well so that

they can encourage their children. Classroom displays and labelling are clear and attractive and children look at them with interest and note the text. Children form many letters properly and attempt to write sentences. They have many opportunities through their creative work to make marks on paper to improve their handwriting.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is very good.
- There is very good use of sensory experience to promote learning.
- Mathematics is recognised in everyday activities.

### **Commentary**

50. Most children are likely to exceed the expected standards by the time they leave the Reception class. Teaching and learning are very good and children make very good progress in recognising repeating patterns and learning to recognise numbers through shapes, using patterns and counting. Mathematical development is taught very well through a range of practical experiences both in and out of the classroom, and the planning of activities is very good. Children have plenty of very good opportunities to practise both their writing of numbers and their knowledge of number rhymes in everyday activities.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Language and questioning are used very well.
- Resources are good and used well.

### **Commentary**

51. Children's achievements are very good and they will exceed the expected standards by the time they enter Year 1. The classroom, the activities and the range of activities are very well planned and pupils take part with enthusiasm. Teaching and learning are very good and there are many very good opportunities for children to increase their knowledge and understanding of the world through role play, investigating materials and noting their similarities and differences, and outside play. Resources are good and are used well. Children have regular access to computers and use the mouse and keyboard to develop early computer skills.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in creative development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children have a wide range of activities to encourage creativity.
- They have good access to role play, singing, rhymes and stories.
- Role play is not sufficiently well planned for.



## Commentary

52. Children are likely to exceed the expected levels by the time they enter Year 1. The quality of teaching is very good and allows them to build on previously acquired experiences and skills consecutively. Children play, act, draw and paint confidently and happily. Creative work is well planned and is an integral part of their learning. However, role play is not sufficiently well focused on developing language structures as there is a lack of adult intervention in moving children on in their learning and this occasionally slows down their learning.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

### ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are very high.
- Teaching is very good.
- Homework is very good and is a contributory factor in the high standards pupils attain.
- Links with other areas of the curriculum are good.
- Leadership and management are very good.
- Improvement since the last inspection is very good.
- ICT in Years 3 to 6 is not yet rigorously implemented to aid learning.

## Commentary

53. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards in speaking, listening, reading and writing are well above average. This shows a considerable improvement since the last inspection, when standards achieved by eleven-year-olds were well below average. For the last three years, national tests show that standards achieved in reading and writing in Year 6 have been well above the average for all schools and in the top five per cent of those in similar schools. Results of national tests show that standards in reading have risen from above average in 2002 to well above average in 2003 and in the top five per cent in 2004. Standards in writing have risen from average in 2002 to well above average in 2004 and 2005.
54. Pupils enter Year 1 with above-average standards in speaking, listening and reading because of the very good provision made for them in Reception, where the focus on basic skills is very thorough. They build on their very good grounding in the Reception class and attain high standards by the end of Year 2. Pupils ask thoughtful questions of texts which show they can listen well and compare stories in their Literacy Hour. For example, when "Jamil's Clever Cat" tells a lie, a pupil is reminded of Pinocchio and how he told lies. All groups of pupils achieve very well. Pupils form letters properly, write fluently and coherently with good purpose. There are some errors in punctuation and spelling, but, because they are keen to get their ideas down on paper and are using a wide vocabulary, spelling errors are plausible. Reading skills are very good. Pupils show good comprehension and can use the information well in their writing. By Year 6, pupils' speaking and listening skills are well above the national average. They can question well, listen attentively and show good understanding of different tones of

voice, genres and sentence construction. For example, they compare the text and film of 'Carrie's War' and are quick to notice differences of pace, omissions and the different effects used in the film and the text. They have very good skills of explanation.

55. By the time pupils are in Year 6, they read and write fluently and independently, and have very good comprehension skills. Pupils are independent learners and are developing their own writing styles well as a result. They are all literate and well prepared for secondary school. Their literacy skills mean that they can research well in other subjects.
56. Teaching is very good, with particular strengths in subject knowledge, marking, questioning and the teaching of reading and writing. All groups of pupils are challenged effectively and build strongly and quickly on previously gained skills and knowledge. This very good progress is maintained throughout the school. Teachers have excellent relationships with pupils and provide them with lively, well-prepared lessons with many interesting new ideas. Pupils are keen to learn and well behaved, and take pride in their work. As a result they learn very quickly because they are provided with very good role models. Teachers' very good marking gives pupils clear and useful pointers on how to improve their work. Homework is very well managed and involves parents suitably; this contributes to the high standards pupils attain. Teachers read to pupils often and well, so pupils have good opportunities to listen. The English curriculum is wide and varied but, as yet, ICT is not yet rigorously implemented to aid learning. Pupils write, read, speak and listen in many different settings. Resources are good and books are attractive and in good condition; they encourage pupils to read and to value literature.
57. Leadership and management are very good. Teachers are well informed and trained, have a clear sense of purpose and are well supported by the very good monitoring of teaching and learning by the headteacher. Assessment procedures are good and are used well to ensure that work is set at a suitable level to challenge all groups of pupils so that they make effective progress. There is a clear sense of direction, purpose and commitment to keep standards very high and improving. The school has prioritised the teaching and learning of writing on its school development plan, and the recent measures undertaken to raise standards, such as the very effective use of target setting, are paying dividends. Consequently, improvement since the last inspection has been very good.

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

58. Literacy is very well used in other areas of the curriculum. Pupils are given a good range of opportunities to develop their reading, writing, speaking and listening skills.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards in mathematics are well above average in Year 2 and Year 6.
- Teaching is very good overall and pupils achieve very well.

- Pupils enjoy mathematics, work hard in lessons and with their homework, and have very good attitudes to learning.
- Pupils develop a very secure understanding of the number system and use a good range of calculation strategies, both mental and written.
- Pupils' use and application of mathematics are good throughout the school.
- Teachers' comments in exercise books are generally focused on moving learning forward and most pupils are aware of what they need to do in order to improve.
- The use of ICT to support mathematical development is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 but insufficiently developed in Years 5 and 6.

## Commentary

59. There has been a good improvement in the standards of mathematics since the last inspection and they are now well above average. By the end of Year 2 and at the end of Year 6, attainment is well above average. This is a direct result of very good teaching, high expectations, very good leadership of the subject and good use of assessment.
60. The teaching of mathematics is very good. Teachers' lesson planning is very good and in line with the National Numeracy Strategy. In all lessons the teachers are clear about what they want the pupils to learn and ensure that they know what is expected of them. The mental starter sessions are used very well and the standard of mental calculation is well above national expectations. Activities are all conducted briskly and in some lessons; for example, in Year 6, the pace is skillfully tailored to the knowledge and understanding of the pupils. In all classes this good pace is maintained throughout the lesson. As a result of the good teaching, pupils clearly enjoy mathematics and consistently demonstrate high levels of motivation and tenacity in tackling tasks. For example, in Year 1, pupils eagerly recorded number bonds that made 10 and 20 and were disappointed when they had to stop.
61. Assessment procedures are good. The progress of pupils throughout the school is tracked very effectively. Where pupils do not appear to be making sufficient progress, extra support is deployed. Assessment within lessons is very good as teachers ask incisive questions and use the answers to move the pupils' learning on. For instance, in a Year 5 lesson the teacher used excellent questioning to gain an understanding of how much the pupils understood about finding fractions of various quantities and then used this information to set tasks that matched the pupils' needs exactly. Teachers' comments in exercise books are well focused on moving learning forward, and pupils are aware of what they need to do in order to improve. Teachers' marking is regular and thorough.
62. Pupils have very good attitudes to learning and behave very well. They are keen to learn, respond well in lessons and generally enjoy mathematics. They are achieving very well because of the good teaching. By the end of Years 2 and 6 a very high proportion of pupils are attaining the level expected for their age and nearly half are working at higher levels. A scrutiny of pupils' work shows that they do a lot in all areas of the mathematics curriculum, have very good all-round knowledge and are developing a very good range of problem-solving skills. As a result they develop a very secure understanding of the number system and use a good range of calculation strategies, both mental and written. However, the use of ICT in mathematics is very variable. Its use is better in Years 1 and 2, but underused in Years 3 to 6 in spite of the effective start that has been made. Overall, the use of ICT is unsatisfactory.

63. The management of mathematics is very good. It is very well organised and benefits considerably from the monitoring activities undertaken by the curriculum co-ordinator. These are clearly focused and result in points for action, which the teachers willingly accept and build into their practice. These developments are then checked to see whether they result in the expected improvements. Often they do and, as a consequence, standards rise.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

64. The application of mathematical skills across the curriculum is good. Pupils use the very good mental calculation strategies taught in a variety of lessons. For instance, in science in Year 2, pupils carry out good measurements when calculating the distances cars travel from ramps.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are well above average by the end of both Year 2 and Year 6, and pupils' achievements are very good.
- Pupils throughout the school make very good gains in learning how to set up and evaluate their experiments.
- The use of ICT is unsatisfactory.
- The quality of teaching is very good and pupils are taught very effectively how to evaluate their findings according to the hypothesis.
- Assessment procedures, whilst satisfactory overall, are not yet sufficiently refined to provide an accurate record of pupils' acquisition of scientific skills.

## Commentary

65. Standards in science have improved significantly and are now well above the national average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils' achievements are very good. The previous inspection findings showed that standards were above average by the end of Year 2 and were broadly in line by the end of Year 6. Teaching and learning are very good. Pupils have very good attitudes to learning because of the very good quality of teaching. In a very good lesson in Year 6, pupils exhibited very good attitudes to learning when they were asked to set up their own experiments in order to investigate solutions and the effects that filtration, evaporation and condensation have on them. In another very good lesson in Year 4, pupils discussed at great length the principles underpinning fair testing. In the very good introduction the class teacher expertly fired questions at the pupils to recap on previous learning and place the new learning in context. Teachers have very high expectations and emphasise the use of correct scientific terminology such as 'thermal insulation'. Teachers throughout the school place a high emphasis on accurately recording and measuring their findings. The use of ICT in lessons is unsatisfactory over time, in spite of several good examples seen. For example, the use of an interactive whiteboard in Year 5 ensures that all pupils made very good gains in learning about plant life and seed dispersal. However, the use of ICT in presenting a range of graphs, charts and information in a variety of ways is underdeveloped. Staff are working very hard at addressing these issues.
66. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils have good knowledge of plants and animals, forces, electricity, materials and their properties, and experimental and investigative science. Pupils are able to set up their own experiments, and a particular strength is the way in which they evaluate their findings according to the hypothesis. All pupils enjoy investigative work and this is especially beneficial to those with special educational needs, who receive good support from classroom assistants and other pupils during practical work. However, when explanations are given, classroom assistants could be used more productively.
67. Pupils of different capabilities learn very well because teachers have very good subject knowledge and challenge them effectively. Pupils are respectful of one another and share resources very well. They handle equipment sensibly and competently. Through experimentation, discussion and careful intervention by the class teachers, pupils raise a variety of scientific questions which push them even further in pursuit of learning.
68. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator knows the strengths and weaknesses of the subject well, and already plans are in place to support the development of ICT more thoroughly.
69. The quality and use of assessment are satisfactory, but procedures are not yet sufficiently refined to provide an accurate record of pupils' acquisition of scientific skills. Teachers' very good knowledge of their pupils' strengths and weaknesses in learning compensates for weaknesses in assessment.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in ICT are below expectations by the time pupils leave the school and, over time, teaching is unsatisfactory.
- The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and knows what needs to be done to improve provision in the subject.
- Pupils are highly interested during lessons and concentrate very well.
- The school recognises the weaknesses in ICT provision and has clear plans to improve provision.

## **Commentary**

70. Standards in ICT are in line with expectations by the end of Year 2 and are below by the end of Year 6. Pupils' achievements are satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and unsatisfactory in Years 3 to 6 but are poised to rise because teachers have made good gains in confidence and skills since the last inspection. Standards are unsatisfactory in Years 5 and 6. Until recently the school has lacked the number of computers necessary for all the pupils to be able to gain the in-depth knowledge required towards the upper end of the juniors. Whilst the teaching observed during the inspection was satisfactory, over time it is unsatisfactory because pupils in Year 6 have not had sufficient experience of e-mailing, using technology to control other machines or spreadsheets to make expected progress.
71. No formal teaching of ICT was observed in Years 1 and 2, but it is clear from the skill levels of pupils in Year 3 that they left Year 2 at a satisfactory level of competence. Pupils are able to write and edit stories, control a robot using simple commands and use the Internet for basic research. Evidence of displays shows that they can also use drawing programs to make pictures. Pupils in lessons are highly interested during lessons and concentrate very well. These pupils have gained much from the recent investment in laptop computers, which are used continually through the day. However, pupils in Years 5 and 6 have not had sufficient time to be able to master more complex tasks like using spreadsheets effectively, desk-top publishing and controlling other machines. The co-ordinator is fully aware of this and is working very hard at raising standards by producing detailed subject audits, running ICT clubs and encouraging staff to use ICT.
72. In the lessons seen during the week of the inspection, the teaching was satisfactory. Introductions to lessons are lively with clear learning objectives. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and achieve well. Good examples of ICT being used to support history were seen in the Year 2 work on transport through the ages, where pupils used the Internet for research.
73. The system of assessing and recording pupils' progress is satisfactory overall. Pupils have booklets to fill in when they complete a task to show the skills they have developed. The booklet also shows the skills that have yet to be mastered to show the pupils how well they can use the computer and what they have to do to improve. When fully developed this should ensure that pupils' progress is monitored effectively and that accurate records are kept of their achievements and this now needs to be implemented across the whole school.
74. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory because the co-ordinator has a very good understanding of the present position of ICT and a clear plan of how the school can improve. He demonstrates drive and ambition and is keen to see rapid improvement following a greater investment in equipment. He currently uses a range of satisfactory, informal techniques to monitor standards in the subject and supports colleagues well in their planning and delivery. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory. More computers have been purchased, a scheme of work has been introduced, but systems are not yet fully embedded in teachers' practice.

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

75. The application of ICT skills and knowledge to other subjects is unsatisfactory overall, but several good examples of ICT were seen to support learning. In Years 1 to 3, pupils develop good levels of independent learning by using ICT to improve their study skills and their own learning.

## HUMANITIES

76. **History** was sampled during the inspection, but no teaching of **geography** was available for inspection. Curriculum planning in both subjects is good. It is detailed, thorough, and has good links with literacy and art and design. Leadership and management of both subjects are good, with effective provision for resources and continued professional development for teachers to ensure that the curriculum for both subjects is delivered progressively and in depth. Scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that they make good progress and standards are above those expected nationally of seven- and eleven-year-olds. Discussions with pupils during history lessons disclosed a high level of enjoyment, understanding and enthusiasm. Teachers mark work regularly and systematically, and give pupils good pointers for improvement. Good schemes of work have been introduced and assessment procedures are satisfactory.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

77. Standards in **art and design** are above national expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, and pupils' achievements are good. Insufficient lessons were seen to make a judgement on teaching, but a good lesson was seen in Year 2 where pupils were developing their skills of weaving. Through good explanations and resources, pupils learnt how to fix materials to different structures such as card frames. Good improvement has been made since the previous inspection, standards have risen, a scheme of work has been recently introduced and a portfolio of evidence contains exemplars of work assessed at different levels. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a good understanding of winter colours and have created illuminated letters using a different range of fabrics. Pupils' observational drawings of buildings, fruit, leaves, portraits and landscapes show attention to detail and good use of perspective, and denote a range of smudging and shading techniques. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a good understanding of the work of different artists including Van Gogh, William Morris, Hiroshige and Hokusai. Art and design is used to support other subjects, especially history and English. Several examples of good use of ICT were seen; for example, in Year 3, pupils developed 'dream-like' photographs, but overall the use of ICT is limited. Pupils thoroughly enjoy art and design and are very keen to talk about their work. The leadership and management are good. The co-ordinator has produced a well-detailed portfolio of work and works closely with the local education authority advisor to develop best practice in the subject. Assessment is satisfactory and teachers are developing their knowledge of skills underpinning level descriptors.
78. In **design and technology**, too few lessons were seen to judge the quality of teaching and learning; only one lesson was observed in Year 3. However, it is evident from teachers' planning, photographs and products on display that the work is varied and properly planned. Standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 meet the national requirements for seven- and eleven-year-olds and their achievements are satisfactory. The pupils design and make an increasing complex range of objects as they progress through the school. In Year 1 they make clay post cards and gift boxes. In Year 3 they make and decorate pots, magnetic games and Celtic jewellery, and use a range of adhesives to make cards. By Year 6, pupils are designing and making pop-up cards



using a range of adhesives and card. They are able to design, make and refine their objects at every stage and test them against set criteria at the conclusion of the project. The curriculum is enhanced by external visits and visits to school by external companies specialising in design and technology education. The co-ordinator leads the subject well and has a very good understanding of the present position of the school and what needs to be done to make further progress. Procedures for assessment and resources are satisfactory. The leadership and management of the subject are also satisfactory. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge but has not yet monitored teaching and learning.

79. Insufficient evidence was gained in **music** because of timetable arrangements. However, in two good lessons observed, pupils were making good progress. Their achievements are good and standards are above those expected nationally by the end of Year 6. No judgments can be made on standards in Year 2 as insufficient lessons were seen. Teaching seen was good. In Year 5, pupils can sing in rounds, sing tunefully and use chime bars to keep in time. Each activity builds well on the previous one to develop pupils' confidence and competence in singing a round. Musical terminology is used well in lessons and good subject knowledge is apparent. Pupils can sing well in two parts and in Year 6 they offered a good rendering of 'Silver and Gold', a song about friendship. Pupils learn quickly and enjoy music.
80. In **physical education** a limited number of lessons were seen and so it is not possible to make a secure judgment on overall standards. However, teaching and learning in these lessons were very good and standards seen were above national expectations. This resulted from very good planning, very good teacher knowledge and very effective modeling both in gymnastics and dance. The high expectations that pervade the school were clearly seen in physical education. The pace of these lessons was suitably demanding and pupils made very good progress. The curriculum is enhanced by out-of-school support for hockey, cricket and athletics. The school has a successful football team that regularly plays against other local schools. The curriculum leadership and management are good. The co-ordinator has recently benefited from training in curriculum leadership and has a clear view of what the school needs to do to further improve the standards in the subject.

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

81. The school places a very strong emphasis on pupils' personal development. Much of its work in personal, social, health and citizenship education has until recently been driven by the Life Education Centre which provides a seamless four-year programme. Additionally, pupils in Years 5 and 6 follow the 'All that I Am' religious education scheme that covers sex and relationships education. The school is currently introducing a new programme that is a county-wide initiative. All staff have been trained to use 'circle time' as an effective discussion tool in their classes. Pupils learn how to lead a healthy lifestyle and try to follow guidelines on the benefits of exercise and a nutritious diet. The co-ordinator for personal, social, health and citizenship education is well organised and committed to the programme. Pupils are encouraged to think about their feelings and to grow into good citizens. They become comfortable in each other's company and are relaxed about sharing their thoughts and feelings. Helping others becomes second nature to these pupils as, for example, older pupils hear younger ones read and then evaluate what they have achieved. One boy wrote, 'It's nice to be able to help others who might struggle in class'. Pupils are happy to take on additional responsibilities in school and carry them out efficiently.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

### *Inspection judgement*

### *Grade*

<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3

<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>3</b>
Pupils' achievement	3

<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)</b>	<b>2</b>
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3

<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	2

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