

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ST CHAD'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Whittle-le-Woods, Chorley

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119679

Headteacher: Mrs Catherine Coyle

Lead inspector: Mrs Heather Evans

Dates of inspection: 4 – 6 July 2005

Inspection number: 267757

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  
School category: Voluntary aided  
Age range of pupils: 5-11  
Gender of pupils: Mixed  
Number on roll: 122

School address: South Hill  
Blackburn Road  
Whittle-le-Woods  
Chorley  
Lancs

Postcode: PR6 8LL

Telephone number: 01257 264480  
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Appropriate authority: Governing body  
Name of chair of Mrs Jane Hart  
governors:

Date of previous inspection: 17 May 1999

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

St Chad's Catholic Primary School is smaller than most other primary schools with 122 boys and girls aged between 4 and eleven. Currently about 5 per cent of pupils claim their entitlement to free school meals and this is lower than most other schools. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is about the same as that usually found. The percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is slightly above national figures. The proportion of pupils from ethnic groups is very low. There are no pupils for whom English is not the mother tongue. The mobility of pupils in and out of the school other than at the normal time of admission is very low. The socio-economic circumstances of the school are similar to those found in many communities elsewhere. The attainment of pupils on entry to the school varies depending on the range of their pre-school experiences but in most years it is similar overall to that expected for children of the same age nationally.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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19740	Allan Smith	Lay inspector	
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## **REPORT CONTENTS**

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS</b>	
<b>STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS</b>	<b>8</b>
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
<b>QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>11</b>
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
<b>LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE</b>	
<b>SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2</b>	
<b>PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS</b>	<b>33</b>

## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**This is a very good school where pupils flourish and achieve very well.** Whatever their attainment on entry everyone is catered for as an individual. Pupils make very good progress and achieve very well in all subjects. The quality of learning in English, mathematics and science is managed very well. The school meets the needs of pupils from all backgrounds very well as a result of very good teaching, very effective assessment and a very well established curriculum. The very good leadership and strong management system promotes very effective learning and enables standards to be maintained at a level that is well above that expected for pupils of the same age nationally. The school is an exciting place in which to work and learn and pupils' personal qualities are developed very well. Finances are very well managed and the school provides very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The above and well above average standards in English, mathematics, science across the school as shown by the results in the statutory curriculum tests over the past four years.
- The quality of teaching is very good and as a result pupils learn very well.
- Pupils' behaviour, their attitudes to work and their relationships with one another are very good.
- The care and guidance provided by adults for the pupils are very good.
- The overall leadership and management of the school by the headteacher together with the work of the curriculum leaders and the governors are very good.
- The accommodation for the Reception class is not as good as the staff and the governing body would wish; they are working to improve this.

Since the previous inspection in 1999 the school has addressed all of the identified weaknesses with considerable success and has made very good improvements. The provision for teaching information and communication technology (ICT) has been greatly enhanced. The knowledge and understanding of the subject by all staff members have been improved through shared training. The premises have been improved to good effect enabling provision to be enhanced for pupils. The curriculum has been audited and refined and very good schemes of work support the work of teachers and pupils in all subjects. The minor issues related to health and safety were resolved very successfully.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*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.*

**The achievement of pupils across the school is very good.** The grades shown are for a class that was smaller than most and caution is needed when analysing data when figures are small. The analysis of each individual's attainment against his or her personal academic targets gives a better guide and shows that all pupils do very well from their prior

levels of attainment. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils of all levels of attainment make very good progress. The trend in improvement is above that for most schools nationally. The children in the present Reception class are on course to achieve or even exceed all of the expected learning goals by the end of the year. In the tests in 2004, standards in reading and mathematics for pupils in Year 2 were above national averages. In writing they were well above the national average. The inspection finds that standards in English, mathematics, science and ICT exceed national expectations across the school. Attainment levels at the end of Years 2 and 6 exceed expectations in design and technology and physical education and are well above the expected level in art and design, history, geography, and music. Pupils with special educational needs and those capable of higher attainment do very well. Overall, there are no marked differences between the attainments of boys and girls.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education including teaching, learning, curriculum provision and the care and guidance of children is very good overall.** The quality of teaching is very good because the staff have a thorough understanding of the requirements of the National Curriculum. Most frequently lessons are practically based and stimulating. This enables pupils to learn quickly and to achieve very well. Pupils' response to the challenging work set by teachers is very good. The quantity, quality and presentation of work completed are very good. The curriculum provides very well for all of the required subjects. The strengths of the foundation subjects lift pupils' achievement beyond the expected levels. Links between subjects are planned superbly with revision and consolidation tasks threaded through from one subject to another. When working with new ideas, pupils are encouraged to use the skills acquired in previous learning. The care and guidance for pupils of all ages is very good. The village community holds the school in very high esteem.

**Pupils' personal qualities and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good.** Pupils like school and respect its values. They have very positive attitudes towards learning and one another, attend regularly and arrive early. Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the playing spaces is very good. Pupils' respect for what the school is offering them and for the views of others is obvious in lessons. When they tell of residential visits and competitions or collaborative work with other schools they display great pleasure and enjoyment. Pupils have a very good understanding of spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of life. Their perception of values and belief systems is developed very well through a variety of opportunities such as working with artists, visits, and specialist visitors to the school. These strong elements play an essential part in maintaining the harmonious atmosphere that reflects the strong Christian ethos of this school.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**The leadership, management and governance of the school are very good.** The headteacher's excellent vision and direction for the school's future are what has made the difference. Parents and governors state that her dedication in setting up very effective systems with the total commitment of the staff has transformed the school. There is excellent and clear direction for the teaching and support staff as well as for the governing body. The governor's decisions follow and track the sensible priorities set out in the school development plan. Subject co-ordinators manage their areas of responsibility very well.

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

In conversations, at the meeting with parents and in the replies in questionnaires, parents expressed a very high level of satisfaction about the school. A few parents expressed concerns that some play was boisterous and intimidating. The inspection team discussed this with pupils and consider that through the playground friends system this does not

present any concern to pupils. Pupils have very positive views of the good things that the school offers them and like the fact that teachers listen to their ideas. Most say that they like their school just the way it is.

### **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

This is a very good school with no major weaknesses. Opportunities for the staff to promote some of their ambitions are limited by budgetary constraints.

In order to improve further the governors and staff should:

- actively pursue their plans to improve the accommodation through the next planned phase of the programme for improvement;
- enable subject co-ordinators to resume the task of working alongside colleagues in the classroom that has been conducted successfully by the headteacher during the building work.



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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

In classes across the school the number of pupils in each year group is smaller than in the average class size in most schools nationally. As a result, the tables comparing pupils' test results with those in schools nationally or with similar schools are not very helpful in evaluating the overall standards achieved. The school evaluates attainments for every individual child. Until very recently all pupils were taught in mixed age classes but the completion of the first phase of the building programme has enabled Years 3 and 4 to be taught separately this term. Every pupil is expected to work to the highest possible level and to achieve their own realistic but challenging targets. Personal gains are tracked very carefully and each pupil is expected to make very good measurable improvement each year.

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

- Standards in speaking and listening, reading and writing exceed expected levels across the school.
- During the inspection, evidence showed that, in English mathematics and science, pupils in Years 2 and 6 are on course to achieve well above the expected levels.
- Attainment levels in information and communication technology exceed those usually found by the end of Years 2 and 6.
- Attainment in physical education and design and technology exceed the expected level.
- Attainments in art and design, music, history and geography greatly exceed national expectations.

#### **Commentary**

1. The number of children and pupils in each year group is below that found in the average sized school. Attainment on entry varies from year to year depending on the number with identified special educational needs. Children join the school from several different pre-school providers. Many have attended part-time playgroups but only a few children have enjoyed full-time nursery education. The most recent group of children to enter Reception had attainments assessed as being close to those expected for children of the same age nationally. There has been a review of practice in the Reception class and Years 1 and 2 since the last inspection. The systems for organising the curriculum have been greatly improved and extend the scope and range of the curriculum very well. Children work in a mixed age class and on some occasions there are opportunities for individuals to work alongside older friends to make the best use of the teachers' skills. Since the last inspection the changes and improvements in teaching, assessment and the facilities are proving to be very successful.
2. From the level of attainment on entry, children in the Reception group make very good progress and most achieve very well. Most are on course to attain all of the expected learning goals before they move into Year 1, and some will exceed these. The fluctuation of attainment levels on entry and the variation in the numbers of pupils, including some with learning difficulties, means that the stringent assessment procedures used are essential. The evidence gathered is used in a sensitive way so

that the provision made can be tailored to meet the needs of each individual. This personal planning and careful match of challenge to attainment is one of the advantages of this small school.

3. The standards attained in reading by the end of Year 2 in 2004 were above the national average. Standards in writing were well above the national average. In mathematics pupils exceeded the expected level. Comparisons with other schools are unhelpful as the percentage value of one pupil distorts figures unrealistically. What is clear, following the progress of these pupils into Year 3, is that every pupil is doing well, achieving to their best personal level, reaching their agreed personal targets and working with great enthusiasm to fulfil their individual potential.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	16.8 (17.6)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	17.2 (15.6)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	16.8 (16.2)	16.2 (16.3)

*There were 11 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

4. By the end of Year 6 in 2004, standards attained by pupils were well above national averages in English, and mathematics and were very high in science where they were in the top 5 per cent of schools nationally. Comparisons with similar schools need to be reviewed with caution but pupils again exceed expectations in mathematics and greatly exceed the expected levels in English and science. Inspection evidence indicates that the pupils in the present Year 6 are on course to achieve these well above average standards.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	29.7 (27.6)	26.9 (26.8)
Mathematics	29.1 (27.9)	27.0 (26.8)
Science	31.5 (30.5)	28.6 (28.6)

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

5. Inspection evidence indicates that those pupils who do not have special educational needs are on course to greatly exceed the expected standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science by the end of Year 2. In all lessons across the curriculum the challenge for pupils of all attainment levels is very good. Those capable of working at a higher level are supported very well and are encouraged to succeed. In these classes the lower attaining pupils achieve their very challenging individual targets because of carefully modified work and the dedication of the teaching team.
6. By the end of Year 6, the average and above average attaining pupils are on course to greatly exceed the expected levels in English, mathematics and science. In class those pupils with special educational needs, are working above the expected levels because support is provided and extra time is allowed to enable pupils to complete tasks. Some lower attaining pupils in the group are likely to attain the expected levels in the tests as a result of intervention programmes designed to help their identified difficulties. To achieve their potential, pupils have worked very hard; they learn very

well and make very good progress. This is as a result of the industry and commitment of the teachers. In other subjects, pupils' skills and achievements in reading and ICT help to raise attainment levels, and pupils perform very well when undertaking practical work. The school is pursuing a programme of work to use skills learned in writing in English to extend different styles of writing in other subjects to very good effect. Individual pupils are encouraged to increase their development using computers to assist their independent research and personal study. Across the school pupils' overall achievement is very good.

7. In mathematics pupils learn very well with great enjoyment and confidence. They use their knowledge and understanding of number very well to solve problems. Using their instant recall of number facts without hesitation, pupils are doing very well. Pupils work diligently to achieve correct answers. Personal targets agreed in mathematics are followed keenly and are regularly reviewed and extended.
8. Standards in science are well above the national average in all groups across the school because they learn through investigation how to become young scientists. Pupils' skills and confidence in planning, conducting and recording the findings of investigations were seen to particularly good effect in Years 5 and 6. Pupils show very good scientific knowledge by the end of Year 6. Work displayed in classrooms and around the school shows very good levels of presentation.
9. Work in ICT is interesting and challenging. Since the last inspection, the drive, aspirations and enthusiasm of the teachers have enabled pupils to make very good progress. The standards of pupils in all classes exceed the expected level. What is particularly pleasing is the demonstration of pupils' confidence and understanding of control technology in both Year 2 and in classes for older pupils. This work is undertaken using programs on screen and when writing instructions to program robotic toys and equipment. All of the pupils are confident when using computers for word-processing, to enhance work in English, science, history and geography. This rapidly expanding work is helping them to select from a bank of skills to plan, organise and review data in science and mathematics. Boys and girls perform equally well in most subjects although in some years the small groups sometimes indicate some imbalance in tests.
10. The attainment of pupils in art and design, music, geography and history across the school is very good and greatly exceeds national expectations. Through lesson observations, discussions with pupils and subject leaders, together with sampling work, reviewing teachers' files and assessment records, other available evidence indicates that achievement is at least above the expected levels in design and technology and physical education. The links with science, mathematics and geography are used well in designing and refining work across the curriculum. The work using writing, poetry, art and design, design and technology and geography in classes, the entrance hall and around the school is impressive. One of the outstanding strengths of the school is the use made of the very strong themed curriculum to lift pupils' achievements in all subjects not merely in those subject to statutory testing.
11. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is very good, due to the encouragement they receive from learning support assistants. Some achieve particularly well in subjects where they are able to do practical work. Teachers measure progress against the targets set in pupils' individual education plans very diligently. Individual education plans are reviewed each half term.

## Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupil's attitudes and behaviour are **very good**. Pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is **very good**. Attendance and punctuality are **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils exhibit the challenging and positive attitudes and behaviour the school expects from them.
  - The very high qualities of relationships across the school are a clear outcome of the strong respect for, and by, all individuals.
  - The school's focus on pupils' personal development is very beneficial.
  - Children rarely miss school and almost always arrive in good time.
12. The school has been very successful in improving the standards of behaviour and in enriching the positive attitudes to learning since the last inspection. In class and across the whole school, teachers now set very high expectations for behaviour and children are keen to show that they can meet these. The school fosters a clear sense of children's responsibilities towards and for others. This is evident in the playground where pupils help to look after each other as a matter of course, organising games and tending to any who are upset or hurt. Relationships throughout the school are very good. As a result, even the youngest children feel very confident about mixing with the older ones.
13. The large range of visits and visitors, including residential visits are a real strength of the school, giving children memories to last them a lifetime and in furthering them in developing new talents and qualities. These opportunities do help children to develop socially, morally, culturally and spiritually. Children's personal qualities are further enhanced by the school's very good provision for art and design and music. Through taking part in extra-curricular activities, children learn more about themselves and others, and find out what they are capable of achieving. Children who were interviewed spoke with delight of all the experiences they had enjoyed thanks to the school.
14. Morning assembly and collective worship make a high contribution to children's personal development. The hall, which is used for assembly time, allows the whole school to come together for prayer and reflection. The music on entrance and exit enables pupil participation in singing and music making. All of these things create a very positive ethos for spirituality.

### **Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 95.8%**

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.0	School data	0.2
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.*

15. Parents greatly value the work of the school in educating their children and they ensure that their children do attend regularly and on time. The school actively follows up on any concerns about attendance speedily and correctly. These efforts by all

result in the school's attendance rate being in the top ten per cent across the country. There have been no exclusions in recent years.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is **very good**. The quality of teaching, learning and the imaginative and totally integrated curricular provision are **very good**. A **very good** range of interesting learning opportunities enriches the curriculum. The school is very successful in meeting the diverse needs of all the pupils.

### Teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching and learning are **very good** across all phases and much teaching is excellent. Assessment is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers across the school have very good knowledge and understanding of the subjects that they teach and have excellent relationships with the pupils.
- Teachers have very high expectations that are matched to the strengths and needs of each pupil; the work planned challenges pupils' thinking.
- The planning is very thorough, detailed and precise; teachers select from a good range of methods.
- The pace of lessons is very good, therefore, the rate of learning for all pupils is also very good.
- The procedures used for assessment are very effective; they are incorporated into longer and short-term planning and information gathered is used very well.

### Commentary

#### **Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 32 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
9 (28%)	15 (47%)	7 (22%)	1 (3%)	0	0	0

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

16. The quality of teaching is very good and is maintained at a consistently high level across the school. In some lessons teaching is excellent. In all lessons, teachers' knowledge of the subjects taught is very secure and the learning objectives set are explained very clearly to pupils. All teaching was good or better and there was no unsatisfactory teaching. The quality of teaching is much better than that seen during the last inspection. Teachers are careful to link learning objectives very well to earlier work and to the needs of each individual. This means that learning is always secure and is most frequently very good. Teachers incorporate many practical activities into their lessons that help pupils to learn through experience. This is a particular strength of work in mathematics, science and design and technology. The investigations planned provide good opportunities for the consolidation of earlier learning.
17. The required skills for ICT are taught very well but it is the consistent use of very well established skills in ICT to support and extend learning in many subjects that is a particular strength. Lessons are very well organised and teachers' planning is very good. The use of imaginative methods for enabling independent and collaborative learning is very good. It enables teachers to work with different groups whilst other

pupils continue to learn independently. Time is managed very tightly. Teachers, children, parents and governors have a comprehensive knowledge of what is planned and they recognise how pupils benefit from the process.

18. The methods chosen by teachers and the selection of resources are always suitable. Teachers explain what they expect pupils to do and learn at the start of lessons. Work is interesting and the pace of learning is brisk. Teachers have very high expectations for individual success and ensure that at every level the work is challenging. As a result of the very positive relationships, there is a shared sense of joy and shared enthusiasm for learning and in achieving the realistic but challenging intentions of the lesson.
19. The school's assessment, monitoring and tracking systems and their use are very good. The teachers follow the agreed marking policy meticulously as an important strand of the shared assessment procedures and they make very good use of the information gathered. The systems in place enable teachers to analyse the strengths and weaknesses in standards and provision. They review the results of statutory and voluntary tests very carefully and modify future work in the light of this analysis. Information gathered is used to set relevant targets for improvement. Across the school, planned work is very well matched to the prior attainment and achievement of pupils.
20. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Teachers use pupils' individual education plans well and incorporate stated targets into their lesson plans. Pupils with identified special needs are fully included in all classroom activities. Pupils of all levels of attainment are constantly and appropriately challenged and as a result they achieve their very best. Assessment and tracking procedures of pupils identified as having difficulties in learning are used very well to evaluate the rate and levels of achievements. There are very useful supportive links with the relevant outside agencies for pupils with more complex special needs.
21. The strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy are very good and are working very well. With smaller than average groups modifications have to be made to meet the needs of each child. The imaginative use of the trained support staff in lessons helps to maintain the expected rate of learning. Their skilled intervention when pupils experience any difficulties enables lessons to move at a brisk pace. Everyone builds purposefully on the sense of success. There is a very well developed partnership between the teachers and the support staff. This makes a significant contribution to the very positive ethos of the school and to the superb working atmosphere. Homework is set at suitable levels each week with time allowed to complete it. During the inspection the review of marked work indicated that homework in its different forms was proving to be a positive aid to learning.

## **The curriculum**

The curriculum is **very good** with many excellent features. There are frequent high quality and exciting opportunities to extend learning through cross-curricular planning and extra-curricular activities. The accommodation is **satisfactory** and the resources are **good**.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Provision for children's learning in the Reception class is very good.

- The strategies for developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are very effective and contribute to levels of achievement that are well above the expected levels.
- Very good assessment and target setting guide curricular planning.
- The school provides very well for all aspects of pupils' creative development.
- The school provides very good enrichment opportunities through the wide range of visits, visitors and extra-curricular activities.
- The accommodation in the Reception class needs to be improved during the next phase of the planned building programme.

## Commentary

22. The curriculum has been audited, revised and improved in recent years and fully meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. Very well structured schemes of work are in place for all subjects. Children in the Reception class benefit from a very rich curriculum, based on the nationally agreed areas of learning and enriched by many visits and visitors. Curricular planning ensures very high quality continuity from the Reception class to Year 6 and very good provision for the different age and ability groups within the classes that until this term were all for mixed age groups.
23. Rigorous planning ensures very good progression across all subjects. Cross-curricular planning is very effective and, during the inspection, key elements from many subjects were combined and threaded sensitively through lessons. During the inspection an excellent example was planned for Years 5 and 6 where pupils incorporated their understanding of African culture and ways of life into their artistic and scientific learning. Time is used very resourcefully.
24. A very good feature of the school's work is the determination of all teachers to value all pupils and to include them in all aspects of learning. Consequently, girls and boys, pupils with SEN, and the gifted and talented pupils achieve very well. Individual target setting is in place for literacy and numeracy and is effectively used to improve standards. Target setting and tracking of the curriculum and pupils' personal development are very good and guide curricular planning. Planning has improved since the last inspection. The introduction of assessment systems for the Areas of Learning in the Foundation Stage, the core subjects and for all of the other subjects in the curriculum contributes to greater focus on the achievement of the individual pupil as well as groups.
25. Provision for pupils with identified special educational needs is very good. These pupils share fully in the same curriculum offered to others. Tasks are adapted when necessary, or additional help is provided to ensure they can experience success. All pupils have equal access to extra curricula activities. The recommendation of the revised Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs is fully implemented. These pupils benefit from the high level of care provided by all staff and the very good relationships that exist generally throughout the school.
26. The school implements the National strategies for literacy and numeracy very successfully resulting in pupils' very pleasing achievement throughout the school. These subjects are used very well in other curricular areas. The effectiveness of the curriculum is monitored regularly and is modified and developed according to the skills and needs of pupils. All pupils benefit from a curriculum that is very well matched to their individual needs. The curriculum is enriched by very good provision of a wide range of extra curricular activities including sports. Boys and girls have equal

opportunities for sharing these and teachers are strongly committed to the extra-curricular activities. The provision for ICT has been greatly improved both in classrooms and in the very well-equipped computer suite. Computers are used very well throughout the day. All teachers are well trained but the school benefits from a teacher with tremendous enthusiasm and very well organised skills for using and teaching ICT. As a result this subject is used very well across the curriculum.

27. Physical education, science and design and technology contribute very well to pupils' personal, social and health education, to sex and relationships education and to drug awareness. Pupils understand the value of frequent exercise and the important elements of a healthy diet. In all classes pupils benefit from the many activities, including extra-curricular activities and residential visits that the school offers. Pupils participate in a much wider range of physical education activities than is often found even in much bigger schools. Pupils benefit from a very enriching range of visits to places of interest that further enhance learning. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 benefit from a residential visit, which enhances many areas of learning and especially the continuous development of 'Life Skills'. Teachers are totally committed to the development of 'Life Skills' throughout the curriculum and during extra curricular activities. The school calendar is overflowing with activities that develop pupils' cultural and multicultural understanding.
28. The school has very strong links with the community, which contribute to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The many visitors to school share their skills and experiences with pupils and greatly enhance their learning. Pupils are very well prepared for transition between the phases in the school and for transfer to the linked high school. The curriculum prepares pupils very well for the next stage of their education.
29. There are sufficient qualified and experienced teachers who, with the classroom assistants, make a very positive impact on pupils' achievements. The building is in a very attractive setting and is maintained to a very high standard by the site supervisor and his staff. It is enhanced by very attractive and stimulating displays of pupils' work. Resources are good and are used imaginatively to enhance learning. The accommodation is greatly improved since the last inspection but is still only satisfactory. The headteacher and governors have worked very well to good effect to improve the classroom provision. They now plan to improve the facilities for the children in the Reception class to enhance their opportunities for continuous play experiences outdoors and under cover.

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

Provision for children's care and welfare is **very good**. Support, guidance and advice for all pupils are **very good**. The school takes **very good** account of pupils' views

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils have very high trust in all of the staff.
- Teachers know pupils very well; so can give very good advice for growth and development.
- The school council involves pupils very well in their school.

### **Commentary**



30. The very good relationships between adults and children in the school mean that children always have someone to turn to if they need help. They fully understand that all adults in the school have their interest at heart. This benevolent concern reassures pupils resulting in increasing their confidence and their individual personal involvement. Teachers are ambitious for their charges and want them to achieve their very best. They give them very good support and guidance in learning and in the very many other activities offered by the school. Pupils with special educational need are supported very well by their teachers and support staff.
31. The school has very good systems in place to protect children. As a result of the recent building programme a few minor aspects of health and safety prompted concern by the inspection team. These were brought to the attention of the headteacher and governors. The school responded immediately and most difficulties were instantly remedied. In respect of the one remaining area the school has already initiated work to resolve the difficulty. Child protection issues are very well addressed throughout the school. The quality of care and the capability of the staff overall has improved significantly since the last inspection.
32. The school council, which has been in existence for only a few months, has already made several clear benefits for pupils' greater involvement and participation in school life. Pupils, who value their role in the further development of their school, enthusiastically support it. The work to encourage the 'playground friends' support system is of great assistance in easing the less than ideal playground areas and developing a safer and more positive environment for all.

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

The school's has **very good** links with parents. Links with other schools, the church and the local community are also **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents have great confidence in the school.
- Parents are very active in supporting the school within the community.
- Community links strongly enrich pupils' development and widen their awareness.
- Information supplied to parents is of a high order and helps them to their support their children.

### **Commentary**

33. Parents are very active in supporting the school. They recognise the importance of education and make sure that their children attend regularly, on time, and are well prepared for the school day. Parents are at ease with visiting the school at any time knowing they will be well received if they have any suggestions or concerns requiring investigation. They make sure that their children complete their homework and listen to their children read at home.
34. For pupils with special educational needs targets agreed by the special educational needs co-ordinator and the class teacher are shared with parents. When appropriate pupils contribute to their own targets. Parents attend the termly review of individual education plans and the annual review of statements of special educational need.

35. The parent-teacher association is very active in creating both social and community events as well as raising valuable funds for additional aspects to benefit children. The parents who can help at school make a valuable contribution both in classes and around the whole school in general.
36. There are very good links with the local community and church. The school belongs to a strong cluster group, which shares expertise and training. The links with the main high school they feed are well developed and supportive of pupils' transition from one to the other. The induction of children at the start of their school life is very good. The school has no on-site nursery so involves itself very well with establishing very good contacts and in the preparation for children's smooth introduction to school by a range of visits and ensuring all are aware of their own expectations in advance. These strongly support pupils' learning and further their wider world experiences.
37. The prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents give a good, clear and detailed overview of school life. Newsletters are issued weekly. This regular maintenance of parent's up-to-date knowledge with the school's achievements and successes increases their co-operation and involvement. Newsletters are on display on notice boards at school as well as being published on the school's website. Termly topic information is supplied from each class. This offers additional support for those parents who wish to assist their children at home in developing their learning skills and knowledge. The school is already reviewing the format of the reports to parents in an attempt to provide more information and guidance about individual progress. Currently the written reports exceed requirements. They give parents a clear picture of how well their children are doing and also set targets for pupils' development.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership of the headteacher is **excellent**, the leadership of other key staff and the management and governance of the school are **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher has excellent vision and aspirations for all aspects of the school's development.
- The leadership and management by curriculum co-ordinators are very good.
- The governance of the school is very good.
- All aspects of strategic planning are very good and have contributed to the very good levels of improvement in standards and all aspects of provision since the last inspection.
- The school's assessment, monitoring and tracking systems and their use are very good.
- The financial planning and principles of best value are very effective.
- As this is a small school, the headteacher and governors are very aware of the issues concerning the workload of this highly committed team of teachers.

### **Commentary**

38. The headteacher and senior staff provide very good leadership and management. There is a shared commitment to raising standards and providing a very good education for all pupils. They have worked hard to implement the school's vision of providing an inclusive and wide-ranging curriculum with tremendous success. There

have been very good and sustained improvements in the leadership, management and governance since the last inspection.

39. The headteacher provides excellent educational direction. The headteacher and senior management team motivate one another very well. They support other teachers and teaching assistants very effectively and this contributes to pupils' very high levels of achievement. Initiatives are rigorously kept on course and are not allowed to drift or lose impact. In this small school subject leaders ensure that agreed strategies for teaching and learning are followed. During the extensive building programme the headteacher has taken on the role of monitoring teaching. The subject co-ordinators monitor planning, the quality of pupils' work and standards. They are now ready to resume their former roles of monitoring teaching. There is a very strong supportive network throughout the school where everyone is valued and is given as much help as possible.
40. The school is managed very well. Clear goals are set for and shared with teachers and pupils; the headteacher has extremely high expectations of herself, the staff and the pupils. Performance management is very securely rooted in the governance and management of the school. The governors set measurable goals for the headteacher who, in turn, sets equally relevant and measurable goals for the rest of the staff. The headteacher, governors and senior management team have ensured that the school has benefited to a very high extent from the findings of the previous inspection reports with support from the local education authority. While recognising the importance of high academic standards, they place an equally strong emphasis on pupils' personal development, enjoyment and independence in learning. There is an atmosphere of mutual respect, understanding and high expectations within the school.
41. All aspects of the leadership and management are very good with many excellent features; teachers' roles and responsibilities are very clearly understood and implemented. The assessment, monitoring and tracking of each pupil's achievement are very effective and have contributed to the very good levels of improvement. Subject co-ordinators know their areas of responsibility very well and are very good role models. They provide excellent support for colleagues and pupils.
42. Governance is very good. Members of the governing body have a very wide range of experiences that they use very well to ensure very good quality provision in all aspects. A very positive and productive relationship exists between the governing body and the school. Governors have an extremely high level of confidence in the headteacher yet expect her to be accountable. They ask searching questions of all staff and have an exceedingly good understanding of the strengths and areas for development in the school. Through the headteacher's and subject co-ordinator's reports and through regular visits, governors have a very good understanding of standards, teaching and learning in the school. They keep abreast of all developments. They are actively involved in the evaluation of how well the school is performing and check that spending decisions lead to improvements in standards and provision. The governing body is rigorous in ensuring that all statutory requirements are met.
43. Governors seek very good value for money, not only in cost, but also quality. This is reflected in the exceedingly high quality of the new building and greatly improved facilities. They have ambitious yet realistic plans for further phases in the school building programme. The outstanding vision of the headteacher coupled with a commitment to provide the best quality of learning and accommodation that the school

can afford is reflected in the improvements in accommodation. Overall, the governing body, with the support of the headteacher, has a thorough working knowledge of the school that directly informs their decisions. Their long-term strategic planning reflects their commitment to improvement, often building on what is already very good.

**Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005**

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	329,723	Balance from previous year	42,648
Total expenditure	331,237	Balance carried forward to the next	41,134
Expenditure per pupil	2,715		

44. Systems of self-evaluation by the management are very good. All members of the school community are regularly consulted and all comments are welcomed and fully considered. Administrative support in the school is excellent. The secretary has developed a highly efficient system for all aspects of office and financial management. The chair of finance provides a very detailed analysis of income and expenditure and the management team is very well informed about spending patterns. His excellent vision for the accommodation and general provision for the school is matched by his financial understanding and guidance. Phase one of the improvements has been successfully completed and there is measured and reasoned financial planning for the next phases. The apparently high level of reserves reflect a sum of money that has been committed for building work that is waiting for completion.
45. There have been very good improvements in the leadership and management of the school since the last inspection. There is an exceedingly clear commitment by the headteacher, governors and staff to the continuous improvement that is driving the school forward. There is a dynamic and shared commitment to raising standards and providing a very high powered and high quality education for all pupils. Inclusion, enrichment and commitment to a strong Christian ethos are at the heart of the school's philosophy. The headteacher and staff motivate each other and this contributes very effectively to the increasing levels of achievement. In this school where all staff are subject leaders, they ensure that agreed strategies for teaching and learning are followed. The different approaches to leadership, management and teaching are celebrated and shared and contribute to the drive towards excellence.

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

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

Provision for the children in the Foundation Stage is very good overall with many excellent features and has improved since the last inspection when it was also a strength.

Children are prepared very well for work in Year 1. Pupils join the Reception stage in the September of the year in which they are five and attainment on entry is average. In the present class all children are achieving very well. This is due to the very high quality leadership and management, teaching, curriculum and assessment procedures. They benefit from very good support from the teaching assistant. The curriculum is very well planned to provide a superb range of interesting, challenging and relevant activities including visits and visitors. During the inspection children were enthralled during the visit of a veterinary surgeon and her assistant when they had many exciting opportunities to look at x-rays of animal's skeletons, handle animals and learn about many aspects of caring for pets. This visit not only enhanced their personal and social skills but also their knowledge and understanding of the scientific elements of learning. Many parents provide very high levels of professional support in the school and their contributions both at home and in classes are superb. All adults are very good role models and establish very good relationships with the children. The teacher and classroom assistants work very effectively as a team. They monitor all aspects of children's learning and personal and social development very carefully. Resources and accommodation are very good and are used very effectively to improve achievements in all areas of learning.

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

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

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

- Children achieve very well and develop very positive attitudes because of the very good teaching and very high expectations of all staff.
- Very supportive relationships are quickly established and children work with confidence and enjoyment.
- Children are sensitively introduced to local customs and cultures as well as religions and customs of people in multi-faith Britain.

#### **Commentary**

46. Children achieve very well in this area of learning and the provision has improved significantly since the last inspection. They make very good progress in their personal, social and emotional development because of the very good teaching and the contributions by classroom support. As a result they know what is fair and acceptable behaviour because of the consistent approach and routine. Children listen to and participate in the many interesting activities and stories and the majority speak clearly and confidently. Throughout the year they have many opportunities for participating in special events and celebrations which increase their understanding of some of the Christian festivals and those celebrated by people from other religions in multi-faith and multi-cultural Britain. They are continually encouraged to feel confident about their achievements and are reminded of the very high standards of behaviour expected. They are encouraged to share and take turns and put up their hands before answering a question. Groups of children were frequently observed working very well together with minimal adult intervention in all lessons.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching and learning are very good and all staff create many opportunities to develop children's speaking and listening skills in all areas of learning.
- Children have many opportunities for writing and learn how to formulate letters accurately.
- Children achieve very well in reading because of very structured teaching and very effective involvement of parents and other helpers.
- Most children are beginning to work within the national curriculum and some achieve very good levels.

### **Commentary**

47. There are a number of excellent features in this area of learning and provision has significantly improved since the last inspection. Most children exceed the expected levels in this area of learning. They achieve very well in speaking and listening because the teacher plans many stimulating opportunities for group discussions in all areas of learning. Children were frequently observed sharing books, listening to stories and practising writing skills. The teacher plans many exciting opportunities that increase and improve children's vocabulary. The teaching staff pose probing questions and there is a display of essential vocabulary in each area of learning.
48. Higher attaining and average attaining children read fluently and accurately with very good understanding. The books chosen are well matched to their abilities and interests. They use reasoning skills very well and retell the story in the correct sequence. Most of these children read familiar and unseen texts with excellent levels of understanding. The lower attaining children read familiar texts and benefit from the repetition of vocabulary. They retell a wide range of stories incorporating recently learned vocabulary very well in clear and well-organised sentences.
49. Very good relationships give children the confidence to speak and all adults listen intently and respond to their comments. The teacher has developed a very rigorous and tightly structured plan for the teaching of sounds with the emphasis on children's ability to say the sounds, recognise them in print and practise them in writing. Children are encouraged to hold pencils with the correct grip. The analysis of writing shows that most children's handwriting is very good; they have frequent opportunities for practising letter formation and patterns and the very well structured system is systematically followed. The excellent organisation by the class teacher ensures that the higher attaining and average attaining children have many opportunities to extend their learning while the lower attaining children have the necessary support and additional guidance.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching, learning and achievement are very good.
- The teacher plan an excellent range of structured activities to ensure that children understand number and apply their skills to many other areas of learning.

## **Commentary**

50. Most children exceed the Early Learning Goals and higher attaining and average attaining children are working within National Curriculum levels. The teacher has excellent subject knowledge and ensures that assessment guides planning and the resources used. Most children count to 100 and add and subtract using numbers to 10 and some children use higher numbers. Nearly all children recognise a wide range of two-dimensional and some three-dimensional shapes. They create interesting mathematical patterns showing a very good awareness of order, shape and colour. Children are encouraged to reason and investigate all aspects of number and measurement. They have very good opportunities for investigations and using ICT. There are some excellent features in this area of learning that has been significantly improved since the last inspection. Children have very many opportunities for using mathematics across other areas of learning.

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

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

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children's learning is greatly enhanced by the exciting range of activities and excellent range of visits and visitors.
- Children have many opportunities for using ICT.
- The excellent planning of this area of learning ensures that children apply basic skills of literacy and numeracy progressively.
- The levels of motivation, interest and involvement by all children are excellent.

## **Commentary**

51. As a result of very good teaching, children achieve very well in all aspects of this area of learning. They attain much higher standards than those expected of most children in the Reception year. Most children are working within Level 1 of the national curriculum. During the year the teacher provides very well for children's scientific, technical and geographical aspects of learning. Children benefit from the excellent range of investigations planned, are highly motivated and are confident and capable users of ICT and name many pieces of equipment that are powered by electricity. A well-planned range of visits enhances children's understanding of mini-beasts and animals and plants found in the local environment. Children have recently visited 'Insect Island' and during the inspection their knowledge and understanding of the life cycle of butterflies was greater than that found in many classes for older children. They described each stage of development in detail with confidence based on excellent levels of understanding. They used scientific terms such as cocoon and camouflage with great accuracy. Basic skills in literacy and numeracy are applied progressively. They know more about creatures and their habitats than is expected

for children of this age. They have a very good understanding of the order of seasons, seasonal changes and the impact of weather on activities. They understand that fruit, vegetables and milk are part of a healthy diet.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in physical development is **good** and has improved since the last inspection.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The quality of teaching is very good and contributes to high standards.
  - Children's manipulative skills are very well developed in a wide range of activities.
  - There is a wide range of interesting outdoor play equipment.
  - The outdoor accommodation is limited in scope for the number of children in the class.
52. Children achieve well in all aspects of this area of learning and most of them exceed the expected levels. In this mixed age class some of the younger children are beginning to work within national curriculum levels. Children benefit from a wide range of activities and all elements are equally well promoted because the teacher makes excellent use of all available space in the playground. During the inspection children created a movement seascape where the sea changed from calm to stormy and some took on the roles of fish that darted between the waves. Children handle construction equipment, paintbrushes, scissors and pencils with very good levels of dexterity and accuracy. Nearly all of them hold pencils with the correct grip and consequently the quality of their handwriting has improved since the beginning of the year. Children identified as needing additional help are given very good support and encouragement and they too achieve very well. The teacher makes excellent use of the outdoor accommodation, which is cramped and without a covered area, and the interesting range of equipment, which includes wheeled toys and a parachute, to develop children's physical and social skills as well as their knowledge and understanding of the world. Enjoyment, health and safety abound in these lessons.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

The provision in creative development is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching and learning are very good overall.
- Opportunities for storytelling and role-play are very good.
- Children's very positive attitudes are reflected in their knowledge and confidence when discussing their work.
- Children have a very good awareness of proportion, colour and symmetry.

### **Commentary**

53. Most children exceed the expected levels in this area and have begun to work within the national curriculum levels with the older pupils in the class. Teaching, learning and achievement are very good. Planning shows that over the year children have an extensive range of creative opportunities. They are encouraged to experiment when mixing paint or when using modelling materials. A particular strength is their very good awareness of shape and texture in art. They produce very attractive compositions based on the study of butterflies and showed very good awareness of



proportion, colour and symmetry. Staff extend children's language very skilfully and encourage their imaginative and collaborative activities. Children enjoy learning and sharing in the excellent role-play 'Insect Island' area where they choose from a wide range of books about animals and use a wide range of recently acquired vocabulary. They share the resources very well and are beginning to understand the need to take care of animals and the environment. The children confidently discuss their work, which makes a very good contribution to their personal, social and emotional development.

54. Very good musical teaching successfully contributes to very high quality singing. Children sing in tune with accurate pitch, dynamics and rhythm. They maintain an accurate beat as they accompany songs and have a wider repertoire than many children at this stage of learning. During the inspection they greatly enjoyed all the songs associated with insects.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **very good**.

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

- Teaching and learning are very good overall.
- Standards in reading and writing exceed national expectations.
- The achievement of pupils, including those with special educational needs, is very good.
- Literacy is used to very good effect in other subjects.
- There is very effective leadership and management of the subject; very good assessment systems are used very well.
- Teaching support assistants are very skilled at supporting pupils in their work.

#### **Commentary**

55. In the tests in 2004 in Year 2 the numbers involved were too small to make sensible comparisons with other schools. The standards attained in reading by pupils exceeded national expectations and in writing they were well above the national average. In Year 6 with a smaller than average class pupils' results show that overall attainment was well above the national average. Since the previous inspection the trend for pupils' attainments has been above that nationally at the end of Year 6. The school's position on the graph for Years 2 and 6 has been above that for schools nationally although the level of improvement in Year 2 has now levelled out. Indications are that the school is well placed to exceed the ambitious targets set for English this year.
56. During the inspection, evidence indicates that the attainment level for most pupils in Year 2 is well above the national average in reading, writing, speaking and listening. By the end of Year 6, attainment overall is well above the expected level for those pupils who do not have special educational needs. Indications are that those pupils capable of attaining higher standards are likely to attain at well above the expected levels.

57. The quality of teaching across the school is very good, and there are examples of excellent practice. The dedicated work by the teachers with the help of the well-trained support staff has a very strong impact on the progress that pupils make. The inspirational and very well organised teaching, combined with the pupils' very good attitudes and willingness to succeed, ensure that the achievement of all pupils, including those with special educational needs is good. Teachers use the National Literacy Strategy very well and have modified it very successfully for use in mixed-age classes.
58. All pupils attain standards in speaking and listening and in reading that are better than those expected for others of the same age. Parents state that for some they are much better than they had expected. When sharing discussions about their reading pupils explain eagerly how they love books. Class teachers develop these skills very successfully. There are many very good opportunities for pupils to speak in front of an audience and to negotiate with a partner. All pupils achieve very well; they respond very effectively to this exciting and very imaginative teaching and everyone is fully included. Pupils respond very articulately using whole sentences. Even the youngest explain confidently what it means to be a good listener. Pupils provide complex definitions such as why and how they have identified their favourite part of a story. The very good standards in Years 3 to 6 reflect the very stimulating teaching seen.
59. The home/school reading diaries are used very well and provide a very useful link between teachers and parents. The reading records of older pupils have been maintained over several years and reflect the wide range of books that they have enjoyed. There are examples of high quality creative and factual writing, especially poetry. In history and geography the skills of using bullet points to list important facts or diary entries to note important events demonstrate their mastery of skills taught in English.
60. Reading is promoted strongly in the school. As a result, for most pupils the enthusiasm to read begins early. Pupils confidently explain that the index provides alphabetical clues but the contents page shows where to look for broader topics. By the end of Year 2, most pupils read from a wide range of texts confidently and fluently, with good expression. They enjoy jokes in the texts and their confidence grows year on year. Many pupils in Year 4 are already attaining at Level 4. In Years 5 and 6, pupils read fluently, with very good expression that reflects and echoes the dialogue of characters and the meaning of the text. There are very few older pupils who experience any reading problems or need to figure out the meaning of unfamiliar words. The few who still need encouragement and support persevere very well, and sound out unfamiliar words, sometimes with help, and they invariably succeed. The standard of writing and the presentation of work in all classes are very good. By Year 6, almost all pupils write in a neat, cursive style, of which they are rightly proud. This improvement in presentation and continuity across all ages and classes is seen in all written work and is a great improvement since the previous inspection.
61. Those pupils who require additional support are helped by tasks being adapted to exactly match their needs and abilities, allowing them to succeed and make progress. Teaching assistants provide very good additional guidance to complement the work of the teacher. The focus for additional support is the targets set out in pupils' individual education plans that are shared with parents.

62. Attainment in writing is good and greatly exceeds the expected level. The powerful use of writing by pupils is maintained in work in other subjects. This approach is lifting the standard of pupils' writing for different audiences to a much higher level, and the school is rightly proud of pupils' achievements. Pupils respond very positively to the very effective teaching, and they work hard. Teaching and learning groups based on the pupils' prior attainment enables work to be matched to the needs of the pupils to very good effect.
63. The subject is led and managed very well. Results of statutory and voluntary tests are analysed carefully, and challenging targets are planned well for the next stage of pupils' learning. The monitoring and evaluation of teachers' performance in classrooms and through moderated work includes suggestions for the staff as to how best to move the subject forward. Pupils contribute to agreeing their own next steps and are pleased to achieve their target and, with the teachers, set new challenges for themselves. The systematic monitoring of planning and assessment is very well organised and has been very effective in maintaining and driving up standards. The subject leader is passionate about the subject and its part in developing young minds. She is committed to developing ways for raising the standard attained by every pupil to the highest possible level. All staff endeavour to create a stimulating environment through displays of books and pupils' work to encourage and extend learning.
64. Library provision is good. Although the available space is limited it is organised very well and is much better than during the last inspection. Books are classified, using a recognised system that is simple and practical and is very well understood by the pupils. The range of fiction and non-fiction books is attractive and the books are easily accessible and in very good condition. Pupils need little encouragement to take their reading books home and to read with their parents and family regularly. Some pupils however now choose to pursue much of their research using the Internet but teachers still encourage them to seek out details in books.

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

The pupils' skills in literacy and language are constantly being used in other subjects to very good effect. Examples include writing about planning healthy meals in design and technology projects and using specific vocabulary in writing up science experiments and topic work in history and geography. In Years 5 and 6, pupils research work in history and geography and develop their skimming or scanning skills very well. Strategies learned in English grammar and literature are linked very skilfully with work in religious education, history and geography. English makes a very good contribution to pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural education. Overall, the carefully planned promotion of language and literacy across the curriculum is very good.

### **MATHEMATICS**

The provision for mathematics is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Overall pupils achieve standards that are well above the expected levels.
- Pupils achieve very well and have developed very positive attitudes to the subject because of the very good teaching and very high expectations of all staff.
- Teaching and learning are very good and at times they are excellent.
- There is very good assessment, monitoring and tracking of each pupil's work.

- The excellent quality of investigative work and application of numeracy to other areas of the curriculum develop pupils' understanding very effectively.

### **Commentary**

65. In the statutory tests in 2004 pupils in Year 2 attained at a level above the national average and pupils at the end of Year 6 reached standards that were well above the expected level. Very good improvements have been achieved in standards, the quality of teaching and learning and in the leadership and management of the subject since the last inspection. Mathematics is a rapidly improving subject across the school. A greater emphasis has been put on investigative work in all classes and pupils achieve very well in all lessons. This is having a positive impact on overall achievement. By the end of Year 6 most pupils are well placed to attain standards that are well above the national average.
66. Pupils in Year 2 apply their number skills very effectively to all aspects of mathematics. They have a very good understanding of the concept of time and time intervals; they match time to daily events and those in the yearly calendar. They classify a wide range of two and three-dimensional shapes using a range of properties including symmetry. Their data handling skills are also well developed. Throughout Years 1 and 2 pupils become very confident mathematicians. They rise to the challenges set by the teachers, try different approaches when solving problems and show very high levels of mathematical reasoning. Pupils' achievement is very good and most are expected to achieve well above the expected levels this year.
67. Pupils in Year 6 achieve very well in all aspects of mathematics. Higher attaining, pupils, achieve very well because of the extremely high levels of challenge in all aspects of mathematics that extend the scope and range of their work. The majority of pupils use a wide range of methods for problem solving and planning investigations; for example, their very clear understanding of place value is reflected in their ability to multiply and divide using large numbers. Their understanding of equivalence of fractions and decimals is very good. When solving number problems mentally they use a wide variety of methods and explain their reasoning. Pupils have a very good understanding of the properties of triangles and quadrilaterals. Most pupils plot the co-ordinates of different quadrilaterals given three co-ordinates and have a very good understanding of co-ordinates in the first quadrant. They use a wide variety of different strategies for solving mental and written calculations.
68. Throughout the school pupils show tremendous enthusiasm for the subject. They are very well motivated and behave extremely well. Pupils' relationships with each other and their teachers and support staff are very good. The school has very successfully developed the National Numeracy Strategy so that pupils apply reasoning skills and creative thinking to their investigations showing very good understanding. There is a very strong thread of mathematical challenge throughout the school.
69. Teaching and learning are very good overall and some teaching is excellent. This reflects a very good improvement since the last inspection. All aspects of teaching are strengths. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and understanding and teach basic and advanced skills very effectively. This is reflected in very clear explanations and very good teaching of basic and advanced skills which contribute to pupils' very good levels of understanding. Planning for all groups in most classes is excellent and is based on excellent tracking of pupils' attainment and achievements. Sufficient time is given for revision of earlier learning and, as a result, pupils consolidate their learning

very well. Teachers question pupils and use their responses to assess their understanding. They have very high expectations of pace of work and presentation; consequently they know how well their pupils have achieved and presentation is good. The extremely high quality of support given by classroom assistants, including those who support pupils with special educational needs, contributes to the achievement of all.

70. The very good leadership and management by the subject leader have successfully raised standards and the profile of mathematics throughout the school. The very effective systems for assessment, monitoring and tracking give all teachers secure evidence from which to plan. Target setting is very well founded on a wide range of information about each pupil's ability. Daily planning, group organisation and curricular changes are soundly based on excellent analysis of standards. The school is constantly seeking ways of improving all aspects of mathematics. The well above average standards in mathematics are further enhanced by the effective use of ICT across all strands of the subject.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

The headteacher and all staff have a shared commitment and belief that children should not only excel in but also enjoy the subject. This is consistently reflected in the ethos of the subject, the excellent levels of challenge and the many ways in which the diverse needs of mathematics are both learned and enjoyed by pupils who are confident learners. Pupils frequently use mathematics as an integral part of their work in other subjects. This is carefully planned to match the abilities of all pupils and extend their understanding of mathematics in the world; for example, they use graphs and charts when recording data in geography and science. An excellent aspect of mathematics is the way in which the teacher of pupils in the upper school develops their understanding of mathematics as a Life Skill and consequently motivates them to excellent levels as they see the relevance of the subject. It is an integral part of observations during the residential visit and, during a days exploration of a river study, their application of mathematic skills were outstanding.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The leadership and management of the subject are excellent; these are contributory factors to improving standards and very good levels of achievement.
- Provision for the subject has greatly improved since the last inspection and children achieve standards overall that are well above expected levels.
- Teaching and learning are very good overall and are excellent in some classes.
- The very good provision for pupils with special educational needs ensures that they are included in all activities and pupils capable of higher attainment are very well challenged in all lessons.

### **Commentary**

71. The provision for science has greatly improved since the previous inspection and this has contributed to very high standards overall. All pupils, including gifted and talented, higher attaining pupils and those with special educational needs achieve very

well. The very good monitoring and tracking by the co-ordinator has made a highly significant contribution to improved standards and the level of challenge for all pupils.

72. Pupils in Year 2 attain standards above the expected levels in all aspects of the subject. During the inspection pupils learned the importance of prediction and observation and the need for only one variable in an investigation. They developed a very good understanding of reversible and irreversible changes applied to many everyday experiences. They made detailed observations as they compared the textures, smells and appearances of bread and toast. They developed a thorough understanding of the difference between this investigation and previous work on changing water to ice as an example of a reversible action.
73. In all lessons the quality of investigations was outstanding. Most pupils in Year 6 achieve standards well above the national average in all aspects of science. Standards are consistently high because the school concentrates on children becoming young scientists and the planning and opportunities for investigations are outstanding.
74. During the inspection the teacher gave pupils outstanding opportunities for observation, reasoning and investigations as they hypothesised, compared and contrasted possible differences between a more wide ranging selection of substances than they had tested previously. Their suggestions about what might happen and how the results could be tested were not taken from a text book but built on their embedded investigative skills and understanding. The quality of collaboration was superb; the challenge was relentless and pupils learned a great deal about the application of science to everyday life.
75. The standards are consistently well above the expected levels because the school concentrates on pupils becoming young scientists and there is a whole school commitment to investigations. Extending pupils' experiences to levels beyond those most parents consider possible enhances achievements. The careful links made with other subjects, especially literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology enhance pupils' scientific understanding. In all classes, pupils use accurate scientific terminology and understand how scientific investigations should be recorded.
76. Teaching and learning are very good overall and at times they are excellent. The analysis of work reflects very good teaching and very confident investigations. Very good relationships allow teachers and pupils to work in calm, purposeful yet stimulating atmospheres, and ensure time for reflection. Lesson planning is very good and allows opportunity for individual development. Resources and pupils are managed very well and with apparent ease as a result of impeccable planning. In most lessons the different approaches used made the speed of learning brisk and pupils very well motivated. Teachers questioned pupils very skilfully and encouraged them to think of answers to questions, solve problems and demonstrate their understanding of complex issues.
77. The excellent leadership and management by the subject leader have successfully raised standards and the profile of science throughout the school. The very good systems for assessment, monitoring and tracking give all teachers secure evidence from which to plan. Target setting is very well founded on a wide range of information about each pupil's ability. Daily planning, group organisation and curricular changes are soundly based on detailed analysis of standards. The school is constantly seeking

ways of improving all aspects of science. The well above average standards in science are further enhanced by the effective use of ICT, literacy, numeracy and creativity across all strands of the subject.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

The provision in information and communication technology is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Clear planning and inspired leadership has had a positive impact on improving the quality of provision.
- Pupils throughout the school achieve very well.
- Teaching and learning are very good overall.
- The use of the subject to promote and extend learning in other subjects is very well developed.

### **Commentary**

78. The overall levels of attainment exceed national expectations by the end of Years 2 and 6 and since the inception of the new equipment pupils achieve more in every lesson. The pace of learning is exciting and very rapid. At the time of the last inspection, standards were unsatisfactory and teachers were very timid using the limited equipment. The change from then to now has been dramatic. The quality of provision has been strengthened and improved in the classes for some time but the new acquisitions have transformed the quality of teaching and learning. The use of ICT to enhance work in all other subjects is now very well established. All of the teachers and support staff have undertaken training and the stimulating and comprehensive scheme of work ensures that all aspects of the curriculum are taught.
79. By the end of Year 2, pupils understand the various forms of communication such as CD- ROMs, tape recorders, text and photographs. They use the computers for word processing, drafting and editing and importing pictures, using the mouse confidently. They are totally familiar with the keyboard and use of icons. They readily log on, edit text, save their work and log off. Using remote controlled robotic floor toys is one of the activities that they enjoy. This enjoyment spreads to other classes where the robot vehicle travels round a complex pathway and is regularly programmed to sing and play familiar tunes. Some write programs to draw shapes on screen or devise ways of liberating treasure from pirates by writing difficult programs.
80. In Years 3 to 6, pupils understand the usefulness of ICT in their work and in the outside world. For example, pupils readily collect information in science or geography and present it on spreadsheets and graphs. Pupils use secure search engines to access websites on the Internet. The work in individual topics is shared with friends using a multi-media system for their presentations with impressive ease. By the end of Year 6, pupils' skills in control technology are well established.
81. Teaching is very good overall. This is proving to have a positive effect on pupils' learning in all subjects and on raising standards. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and explain the purpose of all work very well. In all lessons what teachers expect pupils to do and learn is made very clear. Emphasis is placed on the development of relevant technical vocabulary and the skills learned in ICT are used

very effectively to support work in other subjects. Teachers achieve a good balance between formal instruction and the time allowed for pupils to get on with their independent work. This results in very good learning. Pupils work at a brisk pace and the activities devised to enable manageable steps. Skilful questioning is used to involve pupils in their own learning. Positive attitudes and very good behaviour are important factors in pupils' good achievement in lessons.

82. The leadership of the subject is very good. A range of interesting and stimulating strategies to raise attainment levels has been very well managed. The new equipment and the very recently added computer suite are in constant use. Teachers have undertaken a comprehensive whole-school audit to evaluate the best ways to use and extend the existing skill base. Very good assessment systems are used to chart pupils' work and progress, and to enable teachers to provide relevant follow up work. The resources are good in all classrooms and the new interactive boards are adding another exciting element to the work of teachers and pupils.

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

The use of ICT across the curriculum is both purposeful and very effective. Teachers' planning for other subjects always identifies opportunities for its use. Teachers and pupils often use work from other subjects as the means to promote and extend computer skills. Growing skills and confidence in mathematics help pupils to develop more advanced skills in the subject. Literacy skills are improved by the pupils' growing proficiency in word processing and by the use of programs to improve their skills in reading and spelling. Multi-media programs are used very effectively to explain work in geography, design and technology and other subjects. Pupils use software programs and the Internet regularly for personal research in other subjects such as history, geography, and art and design. Data handling in science and mathematics using computer skills is one development that particularly inspires pupils.

### **HUMANITIES**

As very few lessons were observed in **geography** no overall judgements on teaching and learning were made. From the analysis of work, curricular planning and discussions with pupils this subject makes a very positive contribution to achievement, cross-curricular learning and Life Skills. Evidence from completed work and discussions with pupils supports the judgement that pupils' attainment and achievement are well above the expected levels. Pupils enjoy the subject; geography lessons are some of their favourite activities and they abound with enthusiasm about the range of educational visits. They especially enjoyed Africa week, the river study and the residential visit. From the analysis of work pupils have abundant opportunities to investigate and use a wider range of information than is available to many pupils of the same age.

Pupils use accurate geographical vocabulary and speak with interest and understanding about different parts of the village where they live and compare it with other regions in the United Kingdom, Europe and other continents. The stimulating and creative manner in which the subject is taught develops pupils' understanding of the impact of the locality on lifestyles and employment.

In Years 5 and 6, pupils locate regions of the United Kingdom such as the Highlands, national boundaries and major rivers and cities. They have extended their geographical knowledge and skills by studying physical features such as rivers and mountains and use an extensive range of mapping skills. Residential and local visits to places of educational



interest are incorporated very well into the curriculum. All pupils develop a very good understanding of environmental issues and how all individuals have a responsibility to care for the environment. There are many opportunities for developing literacy, numeracy and ICT skills and the planned curriculum contributes very well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social, cultural and multi-cultural understanding. The co-ordinator gives inspirational support and guidance to all areas of the subject.

It was only possible to observe one lesson in **history**. The quality of teaching and learning in that lesson were both very good. From a scrutiny and analysis of work and teachers' planning and assessment, and discussions with pupils in Years 2 and 6, indications are that standards are very good and pupils are achieving well above the expected level. Particular strengths are in their knowledge and understanding of the lifestyle of people during the Victorian period. Some work listing 'firsts for Queen Victoria' showed how the nineteenth century had moved life on through science and invention. Pupils have very good understanding of the effects of historical events and inventions on present day lifestyles and customs. Pupils' high quality writing illustrates an exceptionally high level of knowledge of social conditions, employment and the differences between rich and poor children. In Years 5 and 6 pupils' understanding of how the life and voyages of Christopher Columbus and the other explorers of the time impacted on the world was excellent. The way in which they linked the work with that in ICT, geography and science typified the way that the very skilled teaching enables pupils to undertake research and learn across many parts of the curriculum within one very good lesson. The quality of presentation is very good. Their work contributes very successfully to all aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

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

Very few lessons were seen in design and technology and physical education but other evidence was gleaned from discussions with teachers and pupils the scrutiny and analysis of teachers files and records and from photographic and retained examples of pupils' work.

It is not possible to make an overall judgement on provision or teaching and learning in **physical education** as very few lessons were observed. In the few lessons seen pupils' attainment exceeded national expectations and pupils achieved very well. In these lessons teaching and learning were good overall. Lessons are well planned and are managed at a brisk pace. All pupils clearly enjoy the subject. They try hard and display very good attitudes and behave very well. Relationships are very good. There is good evidence to show that there has been great improvement since the last inspection.

Pupils know the value of regular exercise and enjoy the facilities provided by the school. Pupils enjoy regular swimming lessons and, by the end of Year 6 have all achieved the expected level. Most exceed this and many have gained awards that greatly exceed national requirements. The school has adopted national guidance for physical education. This provides total coverage of curriculum requirements. Dance is a particular strength and is used very effectively with music to promote culture development.

The leadership and management of the subject are very good. The subject leader provides clear and informed support for others and has regular opportunities to monitor and support colleagues in lessons. The school has established a pattern of additional support for teachers from various specialist coaches. After-school clubs for football, skittleball, tennis

and other sports are available for pupils at the school. Resources are good and are well organised. The hall is small but caters well for gymnastics and dance. For outdoor sporting activities there is a hard play area and a large but sloping field.

In **design and technology** it was not possible to make an overall judgement about the provision or the quality of teaching. That seen in the lesson observed was good. Pupils from all age groups make very positive comments about their work and their enjoyment of the planning and making process. The high quality of the objects available for inspection in all classes provides evidence of regular good experiences. The collected artefacts and work on display indicate that standards attained are above national expectations at the end of both Years 2 and 6 and that pupils achieve well. This is because work is always clearly linked to a purpose and ideas are carried through to fruition. The items are designed to meet a need and are then used in other lessons or productions. They have to be functional and durable. During the process of design and making all ideas are tested and those that prove to be unsuitable are evaluated and re-worked until they are of an acceptable standard. In this way pupils learn that only high quality work is acceptable. Containers for carrying money and other personal possessions were both practical and attractive. Pupils selected from a wide range of materials and fastenings. The buildings made as part of work in history were constructed using three-dimensional shapes from work in mathematics as well as parts from construction kits and all needed to meet the design criteria set by the class in earlier discussions. The strong links between geography, mathematics, art and design and design technology typify the way that teachers manage the curriculum and organise work that is well matched to the needs and interests of pupils.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

The provision for art and design is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The outstanding leadership and management of the subject ensure that pupils in all classes have an enriching curriculum and that the progression of artistic skills is ensured.
- Very good teaching, learning and achievement throughout the school contribute to very high standards.
- The subject makes an excellent contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The excellent displays throughout the school, not only create an enriching environment but also reflect the value placed on pupils' work.

### **Commentary**

83. Standards greatly exceed the expected level and pupils' achievement is very good. From the lessons observed, the wide range of pupils work displayed and discussions with pupils, standards throughout the school are very high and pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 already exceed national expectations in this subject. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 use a wide range of techniques and media including pencil, paint and fabric. During the inspection they created very high quality weaving often reflecting the colours associated with Africa; their very high quality work showed very good awareness of colour, texture and presentation. The quality of painting, proportion and movement in the work displayed was exemplary. Pupils' observational drawings of animals showed

highly skilful use of media in the awareness of colour, texture, facial features and pose.

84. Pupils' observational and design skills develop at superbly high levels throughout the school. During the inspection pupils in Years 5 and 6 were creating designs based on minibeasts, which they planned to transfer into architectural features for the school garden. They studied designs in detail and their pencil sketches reflected very good awareness of shape, proportion and texture; this work was exceptionally high quality.
85. Throughout the school pupils' creative thinking is superbly developed; they are encouraged to think, create, discuss and work as artists. They produce intricate patterns with fine detail. Pupils have abundant opportunities to study art from a wide range of artists and cultures. They achieved very high standards when evaluating the purpose and appearance of a wide range of objects.
86. Information and communication technology is incorporated very effectively into many aspects of art and design. Pupils are surrounded by extremely high quality art and are influenced by art from many styles and cultures both in school and during their visits to art galleries. The challenges for gifted and talented pupils and the support for those with special educational needs are very good; consequently, all pupils achieve at very high levels compared to their previous levels of attainment.
87. The excellent leadership and management of the subject contribute to the exceedingly high profile of art in the school. Pupils benefit from a wealth of artistic experiences. The subject, therefore, makes an excellent contribution to all aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development including multicultural development.

## **MUSIC**

The provision for music is **excellent**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The leadership and management of the subject are excellent and contribute to very high standards throughout the school.
- A superb range of specialist music teaching enriches the curriculum.
- Pupils enjoy the many opportunities for performing in small groups, in assembly and in the community.
- The opportunities for participating and learning about music from a wide range of cultures are superb.
- The school makes very effective use of the available space to ensure that pupils achieve very well in this subject.
- Music makes an excellent contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

### **Commentary**

88. Pupils' standards of attainment and achievement are very good. Provision for the subject has greatly improved since the previous inspection. From the lessons and the musical activities observed, pupils' achieve high standards in singing and have a very good knowledge and understanding of music from a wide range of styles and cultures. They have many opportunities for composition and, during the inspection played Ocarinas and accompanied the hymn very tunefully and accurately. Pupils have many

opportunities for performing during collective worship and in concerts both in the school and the community. The school gives pupils many opportunities for performance in school and in the community. From Year 4 onwards every pupil learns to play at least one musical instrument to a good standard.

89. During the inspection pupils throughout the school sang with a very good feel for the style of the music and an impressive range of dynamics. They responded very well to the accompaniment and showed excellent attitudes to all activities. The teaching observed was very good; teachers have very good subject knowledge and build excellent relationships with pupils. They give children confidence yet challenge them intellectually. Pupils of all ages make superb efforts to develop musical excellence.
90. Achievements are valued and celebrated and there is a very good emphasis on rehearsal and improvement. Those pupils who have special interest in the subject have many opportunities for specialist instrumental tuition. During the inspection some pupils played the violins enthusiastically, rhythmically and with a good feel for the style of the music. Pupils who reach the required standards take external examinations. Other pupils play guitars and keyboards.
91. The leadership and management of the subject are very good; planning is monitored and pupils benefit from a structured and enriching curriculum that contributes to the very good levels of achievement in the subject. Assessment and monitoring are securely built into all lessons and are very well-developed for each part of the subject.
92. The very good curriculum contributes to standards being well above those usually found for pupils of the same age and pupils' personal and social, cultural and multi-cultural development. Pupils benefit from specialist instrumental tuition and class teaching. This further enriches their curriculum and is a very effective method for developing the skills of class teachers. During the inspection particular strengths were pupils' ability to read a musical score, interpret it sensitively because they have a very good understanding of note values and the style of music.

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

Work in this aspect of the school is undertaken through a cross-curricular approach and there are strong links with the local church. Few lessons were observed during the inspection, although in lessons in science, literacy, physical education, music and ICT pupils' development in this area was supported very well. Teachers foster an awareness of the environment and the life of the area around the school and the extended community is part of everything that takes place in the school. The school considers that pupils' personal development is at the heart of all of its work. Within the curriculum, there is very good provision for health education, including teaching about sex and relationship education and drug awareness. The pupils' understanding of healthy foods, regular exercise, fair play and working together in a safe environment is being fostered through the ongoing work in the class discussions and pupils' questionnaires that inform the staff about their ideas and opinions.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	2
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>2</b>
Pupils' achievement	2
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</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>2</b>
The quality of teaching	2
How well pupils learn	2
The quality of assessment	2
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
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	2
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	1
The leadership of other key staff	2
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).*