

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ST. GEORGE'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Littleover, Derby

LEA area: Derby

Unique reference number: 112918

Headteacher: Mr. John Honey

Lead inspector: Hugh Protherough

Dates of inspection: 21<sup>st</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup> February 2005

Inspection number: 267777

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	4-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	337
School address:	Uplands Avenue Littleover Derby
Postcode:	DE23 1GG
Telephone number:	01332 766815
Fax number:	01332 273395
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Rev. Alan Burbidge
Date of previous inspection:	26 <sup>th</sup> April 1999

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This large primary school is situated in the suburbs on the southern edge of Derby but draws its pupils from wide and varied backgrounds including the immediate area as well as rural and inner city settings. The majority of the 337 pupils are of white British origin, but there is also a significant minority from a wide variety of other ethnic backgrounds almost all of whom speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is broadly average at 15%. However, a larger than average number of these pupils has statements of special educational needs. This year there was a change to admission arrangements so that all children enter the reception classes at the start of the academic year in which they become five. The current reception classes have a very high proportion of young children whose birthdays occur in the summer. Most of these children have attended some type of pre-school education such as a playgroup or nursery, but communication with the providers is difficult due to the far-flung nature of the school's catchment area. The children's abilities on entry cover the full range, but taken overall are slightly below average.

In 2003 the school received an Achievement Award from the DFES for the improvement in the pupils' results in the national tests and in 2004 achieved Activemark status.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
8339	Hugh Protherough	Lead inspector	English; information and communication technology
21411	Bryan Findlay	Lay inspector	
27541	John Collins	Team inspector	Mathematics; art and design; design and technology; music; physical education
2766	Rashida Spencer	Team inspector	Science; English as an additional language; history; geography
16892	Julia Elsley	Team inspector	Foundation Stage; special educational needs

The inspection contractor was :

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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>15</b>
<b>PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>18</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>30</b>

## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**Overall, this is a good school.** Pupils of all backgrounds and abilities achieve well, especially in literacy and numeracy, mainly because the teaching is good. Leadership and management are on a sound footing, but not yet consistent and fully effective across the entire staff team. The school offers good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- In Year 6 standards in English and mathematics continue to improve and are above average
- The teaching of literacy and numeracy is effectively planned, organised and delivered. Some very good lessons were seen in Years 3 to 6
- The behaviour of a significant minority of pupils is challenging and, although well managed by most teachers, sometimes disruptive of lessons and playtimes
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is well managed and enables these pupils to achieve well
- The marking of the pupils' work is inconsistent
- The headteacher consults parents regularly, responds positively to their views and ensures that the school provides a very good range and quality of information
- The school is a caring and inclusive community, but several aspects of the buildings and grounds fail significantly to reflect these values

There has been satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection reflected in the upward trend in the results achieved in the national tests. Although many issues from the previous report have been dealt with well improvement in other areas such as the Foundation Stage has been slight.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Taken overall, the **pupils are achieving well** regardless of gender, capability or ethnicity. The well considered support for the pupils with special educational needs helps these children make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. The attainment of the children who enter the reception classes each September covers the full range, but is slightly below average. The children achieve well in their personal, social, emotional and physical development and a sizeable majority are on course to reach the targets expected of five-year-olds. Their achievements in the other areas of learning are satisfactory, but fewer children will reach the goals.

Inspection findings indicate that standards in Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics are an improvement on last year's national test results and are now slightly above the national average. Standards in science are below average.

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

science	C	C	C	C
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*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.*

Over the past four years results in the Year 6 national tests have been improving at a rate faster than the national trend and have consistently compared very favourably with the results of similar schools. Last year standards in English and mathematics were above the national average and average in science. When these results are compared with the pupils' prior attainment in Year 2 standards were above average in English and well above average in mathematics. Those in science were average. Inspection findings suggest that in the current Year 6 standards in English and mathematics continue to improve because of the good proportion of higher attaining pupils who exceed the expected levels. Standards in mathematics are well above average, in English above average and in science average. The quality of the pupils' work in art exceeds the expected levels.

The school makes sound provision for **pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**. The vast majority of pupils display good attitudes to school and attendance is above average. Taken overall, behaviour is satisfactory.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION

**The school provides a good quality of education.** Overall, **the teaching and learning** in Years 1 to 6 **is good**, especially in English and mathematics. The subject expertise of individual teachers is effectively deployed and most teachers set interesting and motivational work that challenges the pupils and encourages effective learning. The pupils' learning is most rapid in those classes where the teachers' expectations are high and behaviour policy is firmly and consistently applied. The many teaching assistants are effectively deployed and make a considerable contribution to supporting the pupils' learning, especially those with special educational needs. However, the marking of pupils' work does not always tell them how to improve or achieve their targets. Teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage are satisfactory.

The school provides a satisfactory curriculum that is enriched by a good range of extra-curricular activities. The accommodation is satisfactory, but many areas are in need of decoration and repair, especially the toilets. The school grounds currently offer little stimulus for the pupils at breaks and lunchtimes. With the exception of some aspects of lunchtime care, there is good provision for the health, safety, care and welfare of the pupils. The headteacher consults parents regularly, responds positively to their views and provides a very good range of information.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall, **leadership and management are satisfactory**. Leadership is firm, competent and committed and sound management systems ensure that the school runs smoothly from day to day. The school's self-evaluation correctly identifies the need to improve behaviour, but staff teamwork is not yet fully effective in delivering the necessary change. The work of subject leaders develops soundly but their monitoring of teaching lacks focus. The governing body has a good oversight of the work of the school and offers strong support and constructive challenge.

## PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The parents express high levels of satisfaction with the school. The pupils are mostly happy to be at school, but the inspectors agree with the significant number expressing concern about the unfriendly behaviour of a minority of children.

### **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Implement behaviour policy consistently
- Make fuller reference to each pupil's targets when marking their work
- Carry out the planned refurbishment of pupil and staff toilets and ensure that the pupils' learning environment at work and at play is of better quality



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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

Pupils of all backgrounds and abilities are working hard and achieving well, especially in the acquisition of the skills of literacy and numeracy. Overall, standards in Years 2 and Year 6 are above average. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve satisfactorily. A good majority are on course to meet the expected goals by the end of the Reception year.

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

- In Year 6 standards in mathematics are well above average and in English they are above average
- Higher attaining pupils are swiftly identified and thoroughly challenged to achieve their utmost
- With the exception of the minority of pupils who occasionally behave poorly, the children with special educational needs are achieving well
- Some of the children's work in art and design is of a good standard

#### **Commentary**

1. The attainment of the children who enter the reception classes each September covers the full range, but is slightly below average. Even though many of them are still only four years old, the vast majority of children clearly feel comfortable in school and have settled happily into the carefully structured routines provided by the teachers. In the classrooms the children get on well with each other and generally share equipment or negotiate turn taking in a sensible fashion. The teachers' good provision for the children's personal, social and emotional development means that most are on course to achieve the expected goals and a good number will exceed them. Since the last inspection the teachers have successfully adapted their planning to take account of the national requirements for the Foundation Stage. However, the full implications of the new arrangements for all reception aged pupils to arrive at school in the September of the year in which they become five have only recently been realised. Thus, in the other five areas of learning the children currently achieve soundly with a sizeable majority on course to reach the expected goals.
2. In most respects the pupils in Years 1 and 2 are achieving well and building successfully on the sound start that they make in the Foundation Stage. Results in the Year 2 national tests in reading, writing and mathematics have seldom dropped beneath the national average and have compared very favourably with schools in similar circumstances for the past four years. Inspection findings suggest that in the current Year 2 standards in reading, writing and mathematics have improved further and are slightly above average. However, the well considered changes to curriculum organisation in science have yet to take full effect and standards are currently below average.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.3 (15.6)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	14.3 (14.4)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	16.7 (16.6)	16.2 (16.3)

*There were 46 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

- The results achieved by Year 6 pupils in the Year 6 national tests over the past four years have been improving at a rate faster than the national trend and have consistently compared very favourably with the results of similar schools. Last year standards in English and mathematics were above the national average, and average in science. When these results are compared with the pupils' prior attainment in Year 2, standards were above average in English and well above average in mathematics. Those in science were average. Inspection findings suggest that in the current Year 6 standards in English and mathematics continue to improve because of the good proportion of higher attaining pupils who exceed the expected levels. Standards in science are average. The quality of the pupils' work in art exceeds the expected levels.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.7 (28.2)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	28.2 (27.5)	27.0 (26.8)
science	28.4 (29.1)	28.6 (28.6)

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

- The school strives to be an inclusive community and, taken overall, is successful in ensuring that the pupils are achieving well regardless of gender, capability or ethnicity. For instance, the effective use of test and assessment data enables the staff to identify higher attaining pupils and ensure that they receive the necessary challenge to help them to achieve the higher levels in the national tests. Similarly, there is well considered support for the pupils with special educational needs, which ensures these children make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. Overall, the progress of the small minority of pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties is good, and occasionally very good when taught by those teachers who are expert in managing their behaviour. However, on those occasions when their behaviour is not managed in a consistent fashion their achievements are unsatisfactory.
- The inspectors' analysis of test results and the pupils' work confirm that the performance of the boys is equally good as that of the girls. There is an increasingly diverse variety of ethnic groups represented at the school, but generally only one or two pupils from each group within each cohort which renders statistical comparisons of little value. Inspectors judge that these pupils are effectively integrated within classes, fully involved and in most cases achieving well. Currently, most of these pupils speak English as a first language. However, the school needs to be alert to the specific needs of the small, but increasing number who hear little English at home.

## Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

The vast majority of pupils display good attitudes to school and attendance is above average. Taken overall, behaviour is satisfactory. The school makes sound provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Consistently applied teacher expectations and imaginative teaching in many lessons support the positive attitudes and good behaviour of the majority of pupils
  - The behaviour of a significant minority of pupils is challenging and occasionally disruptive of learning and playtimes
  - Many pupils are helpful and eager to take responsibility for jobs around the school
  - Attendance rates are steadily improving and are above the national average
6. The school day starts well and pupils arrive in good time to organise themselves and prepare for lessons. Pupils follow disciplined routines with minimal supervision from members of staff and this reflects the trust and confidence the school places in pupils to behave well. Pupils like coming to school and attendance has been rising over the past few years and is now above the national median. Most pupils make good friends with each other and relate well to their teachers and helpers. However, a significant number perceive the behaviour of some other children as unfriendly. Parents think behaviour is generally good, although a few expressed concerns about one or two isolated incidents of bullying at lunchtimes. The inspectors agree with the views of the overwhelming majority of those parents who attended the pre-inspection parents' meeting who feel that the school deals promptly and effectively when such behaviour is reported to have occurred.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.2	School data	0.6
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.*

7. Most pupils concentrate well in lessons and provide positive support for their teachers but there is a tendency for a few to become easily distracted. This sometimes disrupts lessons, especially when teachers do not manage behaviour firmly enough. This occasionally results in pupils being withdrawn from the classroom so lessons can continue uninterrupted. Some of these pupils have special emotional and behavioural needs and present particularly challenging behaviour. Several teachers are highly skilled in pupil management and provide lessons that are challenging and capture the interest of pupils. Their expectations of behaviour are explicit and classroom rules are consistently applied.
8. Most pupils play well together but breaks and lunchtimes are sometimes too boisterous. This has an adverse impact on the enjoyment of the majority and is not sufficiently well attended to by supervisors. A significant number of pupils do not show enough concern for their surroundings, due partly to inconsistent messages about expectations and

boundaries. For example, although the school’s mission includes commitment to the creation of a “friendly stimulating environment,” there is not enough for pupils to do at play times. Playground games and apparatus are in short supply and there are few alternative indoor lunchtime clubs or activities or places for children to sit and be quiet and reflective. Important aspects of the school’s provision such as toilets are in urgent need of refurbishment. This ambiguity of message is reinforced by the way that the pupils in the Foundation Stage are allowed to walk or balance along walls and an area intended for planting. In the other playgrounds pupils frequently run on to the grassed areas destroying patches of grass and creating a muddy surface. It is evident that when given the opportunity most pupils are eager to work collaboratively and help make their school attractive, as the Year 6 mural about Ancient Egypt clearly shows. Indeed on the day it snowed pupils played well together, co-operated sensibly in building snow features and were proud of their achievements.

9. The school monitors behaviour well and has accurately identified the need for greater consistency of approach. It has recruited outside expertise wisely and discussed some of the issues at staff meetings and with pupils in the school council. However, progress has been slow and although the sanction of fixed period exclusion has been appropriately applied, the current figures are a further indicator of the challenges facing the staff team.
  
10. The majority of pupils mature well during their time at the school. They take on a variety of responsibilities willingly, such as cloakroom monitors, responsibility for plants and older pupils helping in the younger ones playground. Representatives value their involvement with the school council. Provision for personal development is effectively based on the Catholic ethos communicated through assemblies, acts of worship and a programme of personal and social education. A few pupils, however, have not incorporated their learning and experiences into their personal values by the time they reach Years 5 and 6 and still require regular supervision and guidance.

**Ethnic background of pupils**

**Exclusions in the last school year**

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	217	5	
White – Irish	8	3	
White – any other White background	9		
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	15		
Mixed – White and Black African	2		
Mixed – White and Asian	5		
Mixed – any other mixed background	10		
Asian or Asian British – Indian	8		
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	1		
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	1		
Black or Black British – Caribbean	2	5	
Black or Black British – African	4		

No ethnic group recorded	12		
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*The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.*

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

The overall quality of education provided by the school continues to be good. There is a sizeable proportion of good teaching and some that is very good. The curriculum is successfully enhanced by a good range of educational visits and extra-curricular activities such as music and sport.

### **Teaching and learning**

Overall, the quality of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory and in Years 1 to 6 it is good. There is some very good teaching of English and mathematics in Years 3 to 6.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The teaching of literacy and numeracy is effectively planned, organised and delivered
- In a minority of classes the teachers' inconsistent approaches to managing poor behaviour occasionally hamper learning
- Teaching assistants make a good contribution to supporting teaching and learning
- The marking of the pupils' work is inconsistent

### **Commentary**

11. The teaching in Years 1 to 6 is good overall. This is especially the case in English and mathematics because the teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of both subjects and are making effective use of the guidance provided within the national strategies for numeracy and literacy. The decision to group Years 5 and 6 into ability groups is working well. The specific subject expertise of two highly effective teachers is providing an excellent blend of challenge and support for both higher and lower attaining pupils in the Year 6 English and mathematics sets. Both teachers have extremely high expectations of what pupils can achieve, regardless of their background or ability. They know their pupils well and provide challenging tasks that steadily extend their knowledge, skills and understanding. In Years 1 and 2 lessons are well paced and teachers frequently question the pupils perceptively in order to establish if they understand the key learning points of each lesson.
12. The staff team is currently trialling a variety of approaches to setting pupils individual targets to help improve their work. The inspectors found good evidence in the pupils' books that all staff have given considerable thought to ensuring that children have visual reminders of their targets. However, the quality of these targets varies considerably, from the sharply focussed and specific to the less helpful; "Take more care with spellings." The analysis of the pupils' books and folders also shows that the teachers' marking of the pupils' work, while frequently encouraging, seldom refers to their targets, nor in many classes does the teachers' commentary tell the pupils how they can improve.
13. One of the main reasons why pupils are learning effectively is because relationships between adults and children are, for the most part, harmonious. In the vast majority of classes the teachers' expectations of pupils' behaviour are high and lessons progress smoothly because the pupils are well motivated learners who like their teachers and enjoy their work. However, there is a small but significant number of pupils who sometimes present challenging and aggressive behaviour. Most teachers manage this well. Class rules are firmly established and the pupils rewarded for good work and, when necessary, reminded of the consequences of poor

behaviour. Excellent behaviour management was exemplified by the work of the Year 5 teacher and her two groups of lower attaining pupils to whom she teaches English and mathematics. Each of these groups includes a significant proportion of troubled youngsters. The start of each lesson involves the setting of objectives for both learning and behaviour. One or two pupils have individual behaviour plans and the teacher and her assistants make frequent reference to these to remind pupils when they are meeting their targets, or when they fall short. The teacher's approach is upbeat and optimistic and the pace of learning for these pupils is frequently good because there is a clear set of rules consistently applied.

14. However, in three or four classes across Years 1 to 6 there are teachers who are sometimes less effective in their management of behaviour. On several occasions inspectors witnessed carefully prepared lessons that started promisingly but whose quality fell away as the lesson progressed. For instance, on several occasions the teachers ignored a small minority of pupils who called out answers to questions without lifting a hand. As a result of this, behaviour deteriorated so that eventually background noise and chatter distracted from the pace of learning.
15. In anticipation of the demands of Workforce Re-modelling the senior management has taken the decision to make considerable investment in teaching assistants. These additional adults have a wide range of experience and qualifications and are effectively deployed around the school working alongside teachers and supporting small groups of pupils in their learning. Several of these adults also make a significant contribution to the support of pupils with special educational needs.
16. Overall, the quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. The adults are developing into an effective team. The teachers plan conscientiously and ensure that the teaching assistants understand their role in supporting teaching and learning. The introductions to lessons are good. The pace is sharp and the teacher's explanation is clear. Consequently, the children quickly grasp an understanding of what they are learning. However, the group work activities following this are sometimes too teacher directed. They do not always allow the children to take responsibility for initiating some of their own learning experiences. The school is aware that, given the fact that they are now catering for many more four year olds, resources are limited and there are insufficient opportunities for the children to learn through play.

**Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 48 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (2)	10 (21%)	20 (42%)	16 (33%)	1 (2%)	0	0

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

**The curriculum**

The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum that is enhanced by a good range of extra-curricular activities. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEN)
- There is good enrichment of the curriculum through out of school activities

- Overall, the accommodation is adequate, but there are significant weaknesses in the school's decorative state and in the toilet provision for staff and pupils

## **Commentary**

17. The school has improved its provision in ICT since the last inspection and now meets all statutory requirements. Planning for literacy and numeracy are well established and contributing to the rising standards. All pupils have full access to the curriculum, including the few children who speak English as an additional language. The setting arrangements in Years 3 to 6 classes are particularly effective in providing an appropriate level of challenge to both higher and lower attaining groups of pupils. The sensible revision of the science curriculum in Years 1 and 2 ensures that scientific concepts are covered in sufficient depth. There are encouraging signs that the school's computers are beginning to be used to enhance the curriculum in mathematics, geography, history and art and design.
18. The school community successfully includes a significant number of pupils with special educational needs. The needs of these pupils cover a wide range including difficulties with speech and language, autism and behaviour. Good quality individual education plans provide a helpful framework that clearly informs the sensitive and effective support provided and enables these children to successfully access the school's curriculum. A good variety of additional specialist teaching and support is also provided through the local education authority to support these aspects of the school's work.
19. Visits, visitors and after-school clubs add effectively to curriculum provision and include activities such as netball, tennis, football, chess and French. A Summer Festival with other local schools gives pupils experience of live drama and trips out of school help develop positive attitudes to learning. Pupils visit the local church whilst older pupils undertake residential trips to Crich and the Yorkshire Sculpture Park, which does much to develop their personal and social skills.
20. The recent change in admissions policy that allows children to start school in the September of the year in which they become five has significant implications for the reception year curriculum. Since the last inspection the teachers have started planning in line with the statutory requirements of the Foundation Stage curriculum. This year, with a high percentage of very young four year olds in the classes the adults have recognised that their planning now requires a better breadth and balance in child initiated activities, teacher directed tasks and a more gradual introduction of formal "lessons". The current resources, materials and equipment for classrooms are adequate, but those for outdoors require further investment.
21. Recent investment in new offices, a refurbished staff room and a computer suite have improved these aspects of the school's accommodation, while new perimeter fencing has secured the school site from the casual vandalism that was previously a problem. However, there are some weaknesses in other aspects of the school's accommodation. Classrooms and corridors are dilapidated and in poor decorative state. The toilets for staff and pupils' are in urgent need of refurbishment. The Year 3/ 4 toilet facilities are particularly unpleasant. There has been some recent expenditure to improve furniture in one class, but there are too many desks and chairs that do not comfortably accommodate the increased height, size and maturity of primary aged children in 21<sup>st</sup> century Britain. Educational resources are adequate overall, but the school library and wider book provision still require greater investment.

## **Care, guidance and support**

With the exception of some aspects of lunchtime care, the school makes good provision for the health, safety and welfare of the pupils.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school council provides pupils with an opportunity to influence the work of the school
- Teachers form trusting relationships with the pupils
- Good use is made of test and assessment data to identify how pupils need to improve their work
- Lunchtime supervisors are not always sufficiently attentive to pupil welfare

### **Commentary**

22. Members of staff are committed to the nurture and well-being of pupils. Pupils place their trust in staff and feel they can go to them for help if needed. This is especially so among the youngest pupils. Health and safety procedures are good and there is an independent audit of school practice every three years. Child protection procedures are well understood and managed. There is an adequate number of first aid trained staff who are available to attend to emergencies. Records are kept to identify areas of danger; however, school meal supervisors are not always conscious of safety matters. For instance, they allow youngsters to walk along snow covered walls and some incidents are not always promptly noted, recorded and followed up.

23. Improvements to the role of the subject co-ordinators mean that systems for recording and tracking the pupils' academic progress are developing well. In the core subjects of English, mathematics and science the co-ordinators, as a matter of course, analyse the results of tests and assessments and then provide staff with details of strengths and weakness in performance to be addressed in subsequent planning. Most teachers know their pupils well and, despite some inconsistencies in the management of behaviour, the thoughtful provision for pupils with special educational needs demonstrates good awareness of pupils' all round development.

24. Pupils are included well in the work of the school and pupils have achieved a number of improvements through the school council. Two representatives from each class discuss issues at the half termly council meetings. However, the impact of the council would be further increased if representatives were encouraged to discuss school issues with other pupils in their class on a more regular basis. Some of the issues raised by pupils are in line with shortcomings identified by inspection. For instance, matters such as toilets and the condition of chairs and desks are being addressed but progress is slow and only one class has had new furniture as a result.

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

The links with parents are very good and those with the local community and other schools are satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school provides a very good range and variety of information for parents
- The school consults parents regularly and responds positively to their views



- The vast majority of parents are strongly supportive of the school and their children's education

## Commentary

25. Parents think very highly of the school and expressed no significant concerns during pre-inspection consultations. The school promotes a very effective relationship with parents, who are kept very well informed through formal publications and newsletters. The school brochure combines the prospectus and governing body's report to parents in the same high quality document, which contains useful information beyond that required by law. Reports on pupil progress are very good, particularly for pupils in the Foundation Stage, where parents receive the complete pupil profile for each area of learning. Parents also receive guidance on how they can support learning, such as a recent talk on numeracy.
26. The school consults widely with parents over general school business and particular areas of development, such as when assessing the impact of a new report format. Results of consultations are fed back to parents through the school newsletter. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are well involved in reviews. There are two consultation evenings at which parents can discuss their children's progress and a weekly surgery when any parent can meet with the headteacher face to face.
27. Arrangements and links with the community and other schools are similar to those found in most schools. The school is part of a cluster group of schools that is developing a design and technology network to raise the quality of provision in this subject across the cluster. There are strong links with the Catholic Parish and the Anglican church. Parents and pupils with different backgrounds speak on their faiths and cultures. The school makes good use of the wider community for school visits, such as to The National Stone Centre, Yorkshire Sculpture Park and Birmingham Sea Life Centre.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall, **leadership and management are satisfactory**. Leadership is firm, competent and committed and sound management systems ensure that, with the exception of some aspects of pupil behaviour, the school runs smoothly from day to day. The governing body has a good oversight of the work of the school and offers strong support and constructive challenge.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher and senior managers evaluate accurately most aspects of school performance
- Staff teamwork is not yet effective in ensuring consistent approaches to improving pupils' behaviour
- The leadership of mathematics is very good and in English, assessment and special educational needs it is good.
- The governing body is well informed and carries out its duties effectively

## Commentary

28. Since the last inspection the school has improved its approaches to self-evaluation and successfully revised the ways that it incorporates this information within the school improvement plan. As a result there is now an appropriate five year plan that sets out the main priorities for action and their projected costs. Each year a more detailed document is devised for the twelve months ahead that provides greater detail about initiatives and incorporates any emergent, additional issues. This works well because it enables the school to set out sensible, long term plans for projects such as the gradual improvement of ICT resources as well as allowing scope for consideration of sudden eventualities such as the promotion of the deputy headteacher to a headship in another school.
29. A further good example of this approach is the way that the headteacher and senior management team have recognised the poor behaviour of a significant minority of pupils and the effect this is having upon the ethos of the school. In response to this concern a plan of action was rightly outlined in the latest improvement plan. A working party has been set up to discuss ways of improving behaviour and some training has been provided for the staff. However, the impact of this work has been patchy because there has been insufficient focused monitoring of the strategies that teachers employ to promote good behaviour and manage poor behaviour when it occurs. Most teachers manage behaviour well and there are one or two members of staff with considerable expertise in maintaining a firm but friendly discipline with the most challenging pupils. However, those who don't have these skills are not being given sufficient guidance and support in tackling the issues involved.
30. Taken overall the work of the subject co-ordinators continues to develop soundly. Subject leadership is strongest in mathematics and English because the co-ordinators have a good oversight of standards across the school based upon a thorough analysis of test and assessment data. This information is thoroughly analysed and used to provide guidance for staff about those aspects where pupils need additional help. Teachers' planning is checked carefully and helpful portfolios of pupils' work maintained to provide evidence of progress across the school. Several subject co-ordinators are beginning to develop a view of the quality of teaching and learning in each class as a result of their occasional monitoring of lessons. However, in most instances current practice tends to describe what happens in lessons rather than evaluate what it is that teachers do that helps pupils learn and as a result there is only limited impact on raising further the quality of teaching to even higher levels. Furthermore, other important monitoring activities, such as the regular checking of pupils' exercise books from across the school, are not carried out regularly in order to check that marking and target setting policies are being applied in a consistent fashion.
31. The management of assessment and special educational needs is good. Both co-ordinators work effectively across the entire school and keep staff well informed and up to date. Individual education plans (IEPs) for pupils with SEN are well matched to meet pupils' needs. The recent introduction of individual behavioural IEPs that set out the consequences of good and bad behaviour are also an important step on the way to tackling this issue. The school works hard and mostly successfully to maintain its inclusive ethos and makes effective use of a good number of external agencies to support these aspects of its work.
32. The governing body contains a successful blend of backgrounds and experience. Interviews with individual governors reveal a strong commitment to their role and a

willingness to attend training on a regular basis. As a result governors are well informed about the nature of their job and carry out their responsibilities conscientiously. A well considered arrangement of committees and working groups ensures that the skills and talents of individual governors are put to good use and that business is conducted efficiently. The governors enjoy a very positive relationship with the headteacher whose leadership they recognise as being a significant factor in the school's popularity with parents and the wider community. They trust his judgement, but ensure through the school's arrangements for Performance Management that he and his staff team account fully for the work and achievements of the school.

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

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	892,470	Balance from previous year	47,495
Total expenditure	846,856	Balance carried forward to the next	45,614
Expenditure per pupil	2314		

33. The governing body makes prudent use of its lower than average income. The current carry forward is appropriately earmarked to cover the costs of important improvements to the school's buildings and facilities. The proposed improvements to toilet provision require rapid implementation.

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

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

34. There are currently 37 pupils in the reception class who started school last September. A large number of these children will not be five until the summer. Most have had some previous educational experience at nursery or playgroup. The children's attainment on entry to school covers the full range of abilities but this year, overall, is slightly below average when compared to the national picture.

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

The provision in personal social and emotional development is **good**.

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

- The children have a good start to school life
- The children make good progress and achieve well
- Opportunities for independent learning in both the indoor and outdoor learning environments are not extensive enough

#### **Commentary**

35. Most of the children are on course to reach the Early Learning Goals and a significant proportion are likely to exceed them. This is because the adults take every opportunity to develop the children's skills through thoughtfully planned activities and routines. As a result, the pupils are becoming increasingly independent in their personal and social skills. The adults teach the children to accept responsibility for their own actions, and consequently in class the children have developed an awareness of, and sensitivity to, the needs and feelings of others. They are learning to share equipment well and establish good relationships with their peers and adults. In class their behaviour is good and they show respect for those around them. However, one or two children struggle to demonstrate these values during breaks and lunchtimes. The adults have very recently started to provide informal opportunities for the children to plan some of their own learning. This is good practice and should begin to accelerate the children's levels of independence and personal responsibility. Both boys and girls change for physical education lessons quietly and efficiently. However, a small minority of children still are unsure of which, for example, is the left and right shoe and some need help and guidance when changing. The children manage their personal hygiene well. The staff show a very caring and sensitive approach to all the children's needs, including those with special educational needs, and have good relationships with their parents.

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

The provision for the communication, language and literacy is **satisfactory**.

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

- The children are making good gains in their speaking and listening skills and in their reading
- There is a lack of independent activities to stimulate and foster writing in order to enhance the levels of achievement

## Commentary

36. A significant proportion of the children are on course to achieve the Early Learning Goals in their spoken English and many are likely to exceed these goals in their listening skills because they listen very well to instruction, to each other and to the adults. Most are on course to achieve the goals set for reading by the end of the reception year, but their writing skills are not so well advanced.
37. Entertaining stories, lively discussions and careful questioning by the adults promote new vocabulary and captivate the children's interest. For example, when discussing pets they are eager to state their own views, opinions and feelings. The adults encourage the children to speak clearly, and a few children can express themselves in a grammatically correct manner. However, some opportunities for the pupils to extend their response to and control of language through regular role play are currently missed.
38. Good attention is given to early reading skills. Books are shared with adults daily and also taken home. The children know that both pictures and text convey meaning and that we read from left to right. The higher achievers can point to and read simple words confidently and competently. Teachers are effective in equipping these children with a variety of approaches for tackling unfamiliar words. As well as looking for clues in pictures and the surrounding text they are used to sounding out the letters of individual words. The children clearly enjoy books and love to sit quietly on their own browsing for sustained lengths of time.
39. The more formal writing skills, including handwriting skills are being well developed. Children are beginning to write letters correctly and working towards a consistency in shape and size. They know the difference between a capital letter and the small letter. There are a few children that are at the early stage of mark-making and creating letter strings but most children copy text well. However, the activities seen during the inspection were restricted in scope and teacher directed. Few opportunities for independent writing were observed and the range of materials and equipment provided is limited.

## MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

The provision for the children's mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The introductory sessions are good and promote good use of mathematical language
- There are insufficient resources for the children to extend their mathematical learning during the practical session

## Commentary

40. A sizeable proportion of the children are on course to achieve the early learning goals in the numeracy aspect of mathematical learning by the end of the reception year and their progress is satisfactory. The opening of teacher led sessions are reasonably productive because the staff model mathematical language very well and encourage the children to use the correct technical language in their responses. For example, most children use positional language such as, 'below, above, in, under, on top of', when putting items of furniture into the doll's house. They are also developing an early awareness of number through a variety of sorting activities. Good interaction with the teacher supports this aspect of their mathematical learning. However, many mathematics sessions are far too long because the range of activities provided is too narrow, the children switch off and the work becomes unproductive. Resources are barely adequate to support other mathematical areas of learning. There are insufficient interactive displays where children have the opportunity for mathematical enquiry, exploration and discovery, for example, by using a sand or water tray.

## KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

The provision for the children's knowledge and understanding of the world is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children are taught basic computer skills very well
- The planned activities are too restricted to enhance children's independent enquiry, exploration and discovery skills.

## Commentary

41. The development of the children's computer skills is approached well with the result that the children are confident in handling the mouse efficiently and following instructions on the screen. Both boys and girls co-operate well together and take turns to control programmes, for instance, when using the Roamer to navigate a path around the carpet. Here, they confidently clear the memory and show an understanding of some directional language such as, forward, back and turn. The good management of the teacher's time ensures that most children have the experience of the Roamer control programme. As a result, the children are well on course to achieve the Early Learning Goals and are making good progress.

42. Insufficient evidence was seen to make an overall judgement on the children's achievements in the scientific, historical and geographical aspects of the Foundation Stage curriculum. However, the teacher's planning indicates that, as yet, these areas are taught more formally as discrete subjects rather than as part of a fully integrated Foundation Stage curriculum. The activities planned do not always appear to provide the children with the opportunity to explore, enquire and discover for themselves and to be independently challenged. In the short session seen there was restricted use of, for example, small construction toys. The displays and equipment available are dull and unimaginative and lack flair to stimulate children's curiosity in the world around them. Larger construction equipment such as wood blocks and water play were unavailable to support collaborative play across all other areas of learning. The staff recognise that this

is an area for further development and are considering appropriate changes to enhance existing provision.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

The provision for the children's physical development is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The children's finer movement skills are well taught
- There are insufficient resources available to develop the children's larger physical movements

### **Commentary**

43. Most children's physical skills are in line with their individual capabilities and they are making steady and consistent gains as the year progresses. However, their attainment is not as high as it could be. The staff and children work well together to promote the development of fine movement and mobility skills in the classroom. For example, they are taught well to handle equipment such as brushes, pencils and scissors. The level of concentration, for instance when trying to cut around a circle using scissors by one child, was good. The perseverance of the children and the encouragement of the teacher ensured a high level of success and pride in achievement. The children are well behaved in lessons on the playground and manage small apparatus such as balls, hoops, bean bags and skipping ropes very well. A sizeable number of children's control of a hockey stick and ball was good. The recent provision and access to a secure outside area should enhance the larger movement skills of the children but at present there is no provision for the children to use larger apparatus or wheeled toys appropriate to the needs of the four year olds in reception classes.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

The provision for the children's creative development is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children have regular opportunities to sing and play musical instruments
- There are insufficient resources to stimulate role-play and the provision for the children's artistic development is restricted

### **Commentary**

44. Most children are on course to achieve the Early Learning Goals in their creative development, but are not achieving as well as they might. The current provision of resources lacks the necessary stimuli to support creative learning. The role-play areas are dull and sparsely equipped. Very few children were seen working independently in the role-play area during the inspection. Nevertheless, when the teacher engaged in some spontaneous role-play to illustrate part of a church service while using the relevant artefacts, this was highly effective and supported the pupils' learning very well. This also led a small group of children to follow through and sustain the role-play

without the support of the adult for a considerable length of time, using the appropriate subject specific language well. The children have access to malleable materials such as playdough but there were no tools available to extend the teacher-directed activity or give the children the opportunity to redirect their own ideas in other ways. Art activities are also very closely directed and controlled and this does not give the children the opportunity to make decisions and develop their own creativity.

45. Music plays an important role in both classes and the children have regular opportunities to experience the playing of musical instruments and singing of songs linked to, and supporting language and literacy and mathematical development.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **good**.

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

- The vast majority of pupils leave school literate and well equipped for secondary education
- Teaching is good and well matched to the wide range of pupil capabilities
- The setting of targets and the marking of pupils' work is inconsistent

### **Commentary**

46. Although the current Year 6 contains the full range of abilities, it is clear that standards continue to be above the national average. This year a significantly large proportion of higher attaining pupils are on course to exceed the expected levels. In Year 2 standards in reading are above average and those in writing are on course to improve to a similar level. Throughout the school the pupils are achieving well and analysis of test and assessment data shows no significant difference in performance of between boys and girls.
47. The key factor underpinning the school's successful development of literacy skills lies in the high proportion of good and occasionally very good teaching. Lessons are well planned and the objectives for learning communicated clearly to the pupils. Relationships are almost always good and the positive rapport between adults and the large majority of children is reflected in the many enthusiastic conversations and discussions observed during the inspection. In Years 1 and 2 the teachers take care to make learning fun and purposeful, so that at the same time as learning the story of "Mr Gumpy's Outing," they are also mastering the importance of tense or their knowledge of how prefixes change the meaning of words. Group reading sessions are well organised so that much focussed learning takes place. The teachers systematically ensure that the children acquire a good knowledge of the sounds of letters, but also take care through careful questioning to ensure they build the pupils' capacity to read for



meaning. Writing is well taught because appropriate pencil grip is established for most children at a young age and by Year 2 a good number have already established consistent and correctly formed letters with some joining.

48. In Years 3 to 6 the teaching builds on this good start and grows increasingly in its demands. The analysis of the children's exercise books reveals a thorough coverage of the national guidance and a steadily increasing capacity to write well for a variety of audiences and purposes. The teachers' high expectations are reflected in the consistent way that work is neatly set out and presented, although it is a shame that school current policy prohibits the use of ink which would add considerably to the impact of the pupils' attractive handwriting. In Year 6 in particular the subject expertise and personal enthusiasm of the teacher responsible for the English "sets" successfully challenges pupils of all abilities. Her approach to teaching pupils how to construct a report fired the imaginations of many because the lesson was rooted firmly in previous learning and the task brought alive by ingenious resources. As a result the pupils swiftly composed well-written and lucid reports of fantasy creatures such as "frogologosaurus" they had constructed from the variety of pictures of body parts provided by the teacher.
49. By Year 6 the pupils are mostly confident readers who speak positively about books and authors. For instance, when asked to select a passage to read to the inspector each pupil in the group was able to do this and explain carefully the reasons for their choice of extract and its context. Subsequent readings were mostly fluent, accurate and expressive. Well kept reading diaries indicate that most pupils are regular, enthusiastic readers who are developing strong personal tastes for a diverse range of authors and genres.
50. The few lessons that were satisfactory were generally well conceived, but inconsistencies in the teachers' approach to behaviour management marred progress for some. The children achieve best when the adults insist that fundamental rules such as raising a hand before speaking are consistently applied.
51. The vast majority of the teachers are conscientious in setting their pupils realistic, challenging targets and marking their written work on a prompt and regular basis. However, analysis of the pupils' books reveals considerable variation of approach. In some classes targets are regularly reviewed and altered, in others they are overlooked. Similarly, when marking, most teachers are careful to add encouraging comments and praise, but seldom suggest how individuals might improve their work or indeed modify work in order to achieve a target.
52. The subject leader has clearly improved many aspects of her oversight of the subject across the school and is doing a good job. Her analysis of test and assessment data means that she has a good grasp of the standards being achieved in each year group. The way this information is then used to establish target groups to "nudge" pupils up to, or beyond the levels expected for their age is a key feature of the school's success in national tests. The excellent portfolio of pupils' unaided writing taken at four monthly intervals is compelling evidence of the good progress the pupils in her class are making in their writing development, and would benefit from being established across the entire school. However, there is not a programme to ensure the systematic, school-wide analysis of the pupils' work in exercise books that would alert the leadership to inconsistencies in the approaches to marking. Although a secure start has been made

to checking the quality of teaching, observations are not focussed sharply enough on the impact of teaching on pupils' attitudes, learning and achievement.

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

53. The pupils' good literacy skills have a positive effect upon their work in many other subjects of the National Curriculum. For instance, most of the oldest pupils in Years 5 and 6 know how to retrieve reference books and are confident researchers on the Internet. There is plentiful evidence of these skills being used in their written work in subjects such as science, history and geography. Similarly, by Year 6 most pupils have developed a fluent, joined script that enables them to write neatly and swiftly when jotting down ideas or planning their work. However, lower down the school the occasionally indiscriminate use of worksheets in subjects such as science, limits the opportunities for the pupils to apply their writing skills across a similar breadth of subjects.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards by the end of Year 6 are well above average
- Leadership and management are very good
- Teaching is good overall with occasionally very good teaching seen across the school
- Behaviour management in some classes is unsatisfactory

### **Commentary**

54. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. The school has worked successfully to increase the proportion of its pupils achieving the higher than expected levels. Inspection evidence shows that the school is well placed to continue this trend and standards are well above average in Year 6, and above average by the end of Year 2. Pupils' achievement is good overall, because teaching is of good, occasionally very good, quality. Recent reorganisation of the junior classes into grouping by ability has meant that all groups of pupils are consistently challenged to achieve their best and the great majority respond with interest and enthusiasm.

55. The planning of the National Numeracy Strategy has been carefully adapted to the needs of the school and has been also very effectively supported by good systems of assessment. These are used to identify areas of particular development for different groups of pupils and to set challenging targets for both individuals and groups of pupils across the school. The achievement of these targets is carefully monitored and pupils' progress is recorded. For example, it became apparent that many higher and average attaining groups of pupils were not sufficiently stretched in their mental and number calculations. An emphasis on the teaching of calculation skills was introduced and its impact was noticeable in the improvement in recent rising standards of both groups of pupils. This is now becoming better established across the school and current inspection evidence suggests that it is now having a similarly positive impact in all age ranges. Last year the proportion of higher attaining pupils exceeding the expected level

was well above the national average and current inspection evidence show that this rising trend is continuing throughout the school.

56. All aspects of mathematics are built on successfully as pupils move through the school. Mental skills are developed through good, brisk openings to all lessons that challenge and excite pupils to do their best. The overwhelming majority of pupils respond with great enthusiasm as was observed in a very good Year 3/4 lesson for higher attaining pupils. A similarly challenging lesson in Year 6 gave opportunities for pupils to demonstrate the relationship and pattern of intersecting lines. In a very good lesson in a Year 2 class, skills of counting and recognising the subtraction facts of numbers up to 20 were taught with pace and challenge that had all groups of pupils engaged and enthused by what they were asked to do. Very well targeted questioning by the teacher gave all groups of pupils the chance to participate and they were eager to explain how they worked things out by doubling numbers. In all classes, support for pupils with special educational needs is consistently good, enabling these pupils to achieve as well as others. All successful teaching is characterised by a very good emphasis on the correct use of mathematical vocabulary, which is reflected when pupils talk about their work and ideas. Where lessons are less effective in developing pupils' learning, there is a lack of pace and challenge, often brought about by an inconsistent control of behaviour of a minority of pupils. The school has an agreed policy on behaviour management but this is not yet firmly embedded in all classes across the school.
57. The leadership and management of the subject are very good and have contributed significantly to the improving standards because of thorough monitoring and effective action to bring about improvement. The subject coordinator provides a very good example in leading the subject and acts as a very good role model for pupils and other teachers.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

58. Mathematical skills are used well in other areas of the curriculum. In science and design and technology, pupils use their measuring skills in their experiments and in their model making in design and technology, and they apply their knowledge of symmetry when producing patterns in their art work. The plotting of co-ordinates is used in mapping tasks in geography. The school is making more use of computer programs to enable pupils to improve their skills in all areas of mathematics. This is having a positive impact on their achievement and their attitudes to the subject.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is good in Years 3 to 6.
- Greater emphasis on experimenting and investigating is improving standards.
- Standards are below average in Year 2.
- There are inconsistencies in curriculum planning.

## Commentary

59. Pupils in Year 2 do not achieve as well as they should and standards are below the national average. Between Years 3 and 5 pupils generally make better progress and, in Year 6, progress is accelerated and pupils achieve well with a significant number reaching the higher levels. Pupils with special educational needs get good support and make good progress.
60. The quality of teaching seen was good but there are some inconsistencies. This is partly because some of the teachers are unsure about the subject and partly because the school's curriculum planning for science lacks consistency. Currently, the scheme of work for science uses both the school's own scheme of work and QCA guidelines. Hence, the scheme of work is in an 'interim stage' and, when one definitive document is produced, it will provide appropriate guidance for all teachers, especially those who are unsure about the subject requirements. There are a number of factors adversely affecting the Year 2 results. Apart from a change of staffing, Year 1/2 curriculum planning has been changed from a topic based approach to a subject base approach. In the interim period there has been some uncertainty about accurately matching pupils' attainment to the National Curriculum requirements.
61. An analysis of pupils' work shows that the teachers place an increasing emphasis on pupils planning their own experiments and carrying out investigations independently, an approach which is improving the pupils' enquiry skills. However, in Year 2, pupils are either given work sheets, which require a limited response, or asked to draw diagrams in a very limited space. In most classes pupils are not always taught basic skills of making a scientific drawing and diagrams, and this highlights a weakness in pupils' ability to record efficiently and clearly what they find.
62. In the most effective lessons, staff expertise and enthusiasm motivate pupils to reach good standards. In these lessons, pupils approach practical tasks with enthusiasm and enjoyment. This was illustrated well in Year 5/ 6 and Year 3/ 4 classes. In both sessions, very good preparation by the staff with exciting resources led Year 6 pupils to work in pairs and produce well-researched fact sheets about the heart, how it functions and the differences in pulse rate before and after exercise. Pupils knew how to set out an experiment and interpret the results. For example, they were quite surprised to find that the heart rate one of their class mates, who swims every day, did not change significantly after she ran up and down a staircase. They became very aware of need to exercise regularly. Pupils used their literacy and numeracy skills well as they tabulated information and wrote up their experiments in their own words. In Year 3/4, the teacher successfully taught, and showed, in a lesson on electrical circuits, how electrons flow along a circuit. A difficult concept was taught effectively because imaginatively chosen resources were expertly demonstrated. Teaching in these classes is based on mutual respect and understanding. Pupils share ideas and have lively discussions with each other and their teacher in which they confidently express their own ideas. They behave responsibly and well.
63. In one lesson in Year 2, where teaching is satisfactory, key elements of the lesson were not communicated well because the teaching lacked effective strategies to manage pupils' behaviour. The tasks were not sufficiently challenging for the more able pupils

and the pace was slowed down because of the constant interruptions. Insufficient opportunities are given to pupils to record their work and this, and the overuse of worksheets, limit the development of their written skills to a level expected at this age.

64. Assessment is carried out in some classes after each unit. In one good example, the Year 3 teacher has used the outcomes of the assessment to re-visit the work and re-test the pupils. Pupils made significant gains second time as they had a better understanding. Marking is inconsistent. In a few classes marking is very thorough and comments identify pupils' learning difficulties, but in two classes incorrect answers were ticked.
65. The subject manager has a satisfactory overview of the subject. Year 2 and 6 national assessments are analysed, weak areas identified and this information is shared with the staff.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is a sensible plan to bring about continuing improvement in provision
- Not enough use is made of the computer suite in the mornings
- The pupils are enthusiastic users of new technology

### **Commentary**

66. The vast majority of inspection evidence relates to the work of pupils in Years 3 to 6 and confirms that there has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. In Years 2 and 6 standards are in line with the expected levels and pupils are achieving soundly across the full breadth of the programme of study outlined in the National Curriculum. A new curriculum framework is nearing the end of its first two year cycle and the co-coordinator's carefully compiled portfolio of samples of pupils' work confirms that they now have greater access to those elements relating to developing ideas and making things happen.
67. The large majority of the pupils are keen and enthusiastic computer users many of whom have access to similar technology at home. Conversations with a cross section of children reveal that by Year 6 most have a secure grasp of the sorts of work expected of eleven-year-olds and a few are exceeding this. The pupils speak informatively about their use of the World Wide Web, data handling and the ways that computers can be used to control events such as the movement of a cursor. They understand the many ways in which micro technology is used in appliances around the work place and home.
68. In lessons the vast majority of pupils work hard and demonstrate commitment to the task in hand. Teaching is satisfactory, and occasionally good, as in a geography lesson when Year 6 carried out a good variety of research on the Internet. In one potentially very good lesson with Years 3 and 4 the teacher's high expectations led to her attempting to fit too much material into the time available. The pupils worked co-operatively, but as the lesson wore on the teacher was too accepting of the increasing

amount of noise being made by the class and this hampered what might otherwise have been some rapid learning.

69. The subject leadership is principled and well organised, but continues for the moment to be focussed upon matters of provision rather than standards and pupil outcomes. Under the guidance of the subject coordinator the school is making significant and wise investment in ICT. The recent installation of interactive whiteboards (IWBs) in two classrooms is helping to raise the profile of new technologies across the school and enable their use in pupils' day to day learning in many subjects. This is important because currently the ICT suite is not always in use, especially during the first part of the morning. The subject co-ordinator knows this and keeps careful track of who uses the suite, but inspection analysis of the pupils' ICT diaries shows that whilst Year 3 and 4 classes often have upwards of 20 entries, those in Years 5 and 6 range from eight to a maximum of twelve.

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

70. The continuing improvements in provision have resulted in most classes making satisfactory use of ICT across the curriculum. The children in Years 3 and 4 make effective use of the program "Compose – junior" in order to analyse and assemble the parts of a simple tune. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 confidently research information about St Lucia on the Internet and use a mathematics program to present graphs of the data collected in science. However, these illustrations are examples of the initiative of individual teachers and as yet there is no agreed, coherent programme that sets out where and when ICT will be deployed within the other subjects of the National Curriculum.

### **HUMANITIES**

71. No history lessons were seen during the inspection and only two geography and ICT lessons; therefore, no judgement about the quality of provision can be made. Evidence was gathered from talking to the pupils, looking at their work and talking to the teachers.
72. The **history** curriculum is covered satisfactorily. Pupils in Year 6 have done extensive research on Ancient Egypt. The work is presented carefully with chapters on geographical location, religion and cultural differences and expectations during life and after death. There is good evidence of pupils developing skills in selecting information from secondary sources and using information to support their statements. The coverage of the topic on the Vikings and Romans is comprehensive but there is too much reliance on commercially produced worksheets. The use of these worksheets limits opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy skills. History work on the Vikings in the middle years is good; the standard, quality and amount of work produced reflect high teacher expectations.
73. Pupils in Year 2 have developed their knowledge and understanding of houses and transport in the past. Pupils have visited Pickford House in Derby as part of their study and have done a project on 'The Fire of London'. There are inconsistencies in the

standard and quality of work produced in the two Year 2 classes. In one, there is a greater emphasis on pupils doing independent work and answering some challenging questions and in the other most of the work is based on completing one word or short sentences on worksheets. Throughout the school, the pupils' sense of time is developing well. Pupils' work is marked but there are not many examples of teachers' comments which would develop their understanding further.

74. The history subject leader provides very enthusiastic leadership and has keenly promoted the teaching of history through drama. A review of the scheme of work, in order to align it more closely to the QCA guidelines, has been proposed as a result of her monitoring plans and observing them.
75. The last time the school was inspected standards in **geography** were below national expectations. The new non-specialist geography co-ordinator, who was appointed two years ago, has introduced national (QCA) guidelines as the scheme of work in order to secure progression across the year groups and provide guidelines which better support staff in their planning. As the subject is taught on a rolling programme of half-termly blocks, only the linked Year 2 work was available. Discussion with pupils indicates that they are acquiring a sound knowledge of local places.
76. Analysis of pupils' work in Year 1 shows that many are working at a higher than expected level for their age. They have drawn plans of their classrooms, plotted their route from home to school, identifying key features. Results of traffic surveys have been translated into bar graphs and they are beginning to interpret these results. Year 1 pupils are achieving well. In Year 6, pupils are studying the island of St Lucia. This project is planned to develop ICT skills in tandem with geographical knowledge and understanding. Discussion with Year 6 pupils suggests that they bring a developing appreciation of the geography of St Lucia; they learn that there are risks to the fishing industry and that building too close to the shore's edge may cause coastal erosion. They have a growing understanding of the competitive market for bananas and its impact on the island's economy. The quality of teaching is good with a lively pace. Resources are thoughtfully produced based on a secure understanding of the subject's requirements. ICT skills are integrated well. Pupils are developing their geographical skills and have a knowledge and understanding broadly in line with national expectations.
77. Geography has been identified as a priority area in this year's school improvement programme and the subject leader, who has not been able to monitor previously, will have the opportunity to do so this year. She is aware of the need to raise standards and also explore in-service training opportunities for herself.

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

78. In both design and technology and music too few lessons were seen to enable a judgement to be made about the quality of the provision. In **design and technology**, the limited evidence indicates that pupils experience the aspects of designing, making and evaluating their work. Thoughtful use of national guidance ensures skills are progressively taught. Current resources are being further developed and professional development is planned for staff later this term.

79. In **music**, planning shows that all the required elements of the curriculum are taught. Instrumental music lessons are taught by outside staff. School performances, singing workshops and visiting musicians contribute to pupils' overall musical experiences. In collective worship, children's enjoyment in singing hymns is obvious and contributes to their spiritual and personal development.

### **Physical education**

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

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

- Teaching is good overall and most pupils are achieving well
- Where behaviour is not managed well, pupils' learning suffers

### **Commentary**

80. Satisfactory progress has been made since the last inspection and the previous standards have been maintained. All the lessons seen were in gymnastics but looking at teachers' planning shows that all the requirements of the National Curriculum are being met.

81. The overall quality of teaching is good. Teachers demonstrate sound subject knowledge and this is used well to demonstrate and guide pupils. For example, in a good lesson seen in Year 2, teaching had very clear aims for the activities planned to develop pupils' skills in catching and throwing. This was most effective because of the good support and guidance, encouragement and challenge to which all pupils responded with enthusiasm and involvement. Boys and girls are equally enthusiastic in their approach to physical education lessons and greatly enjoy the activities planned for them. The progression in these skills was evident in another Year 3/4 lesson on the same skills. Both lessons were successful because both teachers were consistent in their expectations of good behaviour and all groups of pupils responded positively to the demands made of them. Where occasional poor behaviour is not well managed, for instance, in an unsatisfactory Year 5 and 6 lesson, the pupils do not learn effectively.

### **Art and design**

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

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

- Teaching is good and most pupils are achieving well
- Attainment is above that expected in Years 2 and 6
- Leadership and management are good

### **Commentary**

82. Although there are recent changes to the leadership and management of the subject, the majority of pupils continue to reach above expected levels of attainment by the end of Year 6 and Year 2. This is due to the consistently good teaching across the school and the way that the current changes have been managed so well. Teachers show a good knowledge of the subject and plan exciting and stimulating activities that motivate and interest all groups of pupils. For example, a particularly effective lesson was seen in Year 2 where pupils were encouraged to explore pattern in their own environment through careful and sensitive teaching that developed their curiosity and enthusiasm.



83. Current work on painting in the style of the Impressionists in junior classes has developed effectively the pupils' skills in the use of charcoal and pencil before moving on to colour mixing and the use of pastels. In a Year 3/ 4 lesson seen, many pupils demonstrated good techniques in paint application using spreaders or pastels. They worked hard and with concentration and were pleased with their work. Scrutiny of previous work shows that good use is being made of ICT to create symmetrical patterns and work in the style of Mondrian. Older pupils have produced their own 'soap' sculptures after their visit to the Yorkshire Sculpture Park, while younger pupils have made clay 'minibeasts' in their science topic. All pupils experience a good range of styles and materials as they progress through the school. Pupils' work is attractively displayed and helps to enhance the overall appearance of the school.

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

84. Only one specific lessons dealing with personal, social and health education and citizenship was seen but it is evident that these aspects are well represented in all aspects of teaching and learning. There are times when pupils have opportunities to consider particular issues as they sit together to talk about their ideas. Pupils learn about how to live healthily in science and many show a keen awareness of the implications of world events such as the recent tsunami.

**PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS***Inspection judgement***Grade**

<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	3

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

<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>4</b>
Attendance	3
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	4
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	4

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

<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>4</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	4

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