

INSPECTION REPORT

St Gregory's Roman Catholic Primary School

Ealing, London

LEA area: London Borough of Ealing

Unique reference number: 101923

Headteacher: Mrs Patricia McCarthy

Lead inspector: Mr I H Jones

Dates of inspection: 4th to 7th July 2005

Inspection number: 267788

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: 3 - 11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 464

School address: Woodfield Road
Ealing
London
Postcode: W5 1SL

Telephone number: 020 89977550
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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body
Name of chair of Mrs Monica Budden
governors:

Date of previous 19th April 1999
inspection:

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St. Gregory's is a voluntary aided Roman Catholic primary school that draws its pupils from the wider community as well as the local area. Pupils are baptised Catholics. There are 467 pupils aged between 3 and 11 years on roll, and the school is bigger than the average primary school. Pupils' home backgrounds vary but overall represent socio-economic circumstances that are above the national average. The majority of pupils come from white British and European backgrounds. The percentage of pupils who do not speak English as their first language is high when compared with schools nationally. However, there are very few pupils in Years 1 to 6 who are not reasonably competent in spoken and written English. Approximately 4.6 per cent of the pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, which is well below the national average of 18.4 per cent. Pupils' standards of attainment on entry to the nursery are higher than those typical for their age. The number of pupils with special educational needs, including those with statements of special educational needs, has remained relatively stable over recent years and is below the national average. Most of these pupils have specific learning, emotional or behavioural difficulties. The number of pupils joining or leaving the school at other than the usual times varies annually but is broadly typical of the national picture. Over recent years, the school has experienced a large turnover of staff. The school was recognised for an achievement award in 2002.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
2758	I. Jones	Lead inspector	Mathematics, Art and design, English as an additional language,
9577	E. Parrish	Lay inspector	
4099	R. Braithwaite	Team inspector	English, History, Physical Education, Special Educational Needs.
31334	B. Atcheson	Team inspector	Foundation Stage, Geography, Music, Personal, Social and Health Education and Citizenship.
35091	B. Pengelly	Team inspector	Science, ICT, Design and Technology

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school has serious weaknesses due to the poor leadership and management of the headteacher, including her management and use of the school's finances.

The headteacher has a very limited understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Although the morale of staff is very low, they have worked effectively as skilled professionals in the classroom, often in isolation and without the support or encouragement of the headteacher. Their efforts have helped to ensure that the quality of teaching and learning is good and that pupils achieve well. Standards overall are good, and high by the end of Year 6. Overall, the school provides satisfactory value for money. This represents a decline since the last inspection when it was judged to be very good.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The headteacher's poor leadership and management have resulted in the long-term, irretrievable breakdown in her relationship with the school staff.
- The management and use of the school's finances are poor.
- The school fails to meet statutory requirements in respect of child protection arrangements.
- In spite of the very difficult circumstances in the school, the deputy headteacher, senior managers and staff have worked successfully, with considerable dedication and purpose, to the benefit of all pupils.
- Standards at the end of Year 6 have remained high, but standards at the end of Year 2 have declined over recent years.
- The pupils' good behaviour and very good attitudes have a positive effect upon their personal and academic development.
- Very effective teaching in the Foundation Stage (nursery and reception years) and in Year 6 ensures that pupils achieve very well.
- The school's monitoring and self-evaluation procedures, managed by the headteacher, are poor and seriously restrict the school's ability to improve.
- The governing body has not held the school to account for its performance or taken effective action to resolve long-term problems within the school.
- Assessment procedures are generally inconsistent and often informal.

The overall effectiveness of the school has **declined** since the last inspection in 1999 when most aspects of its work were found to be very good. The school's poor leadership has resulted in the lack of a clear direction and structure for its development. Inconsistent practices have continued or developed in important aspects of the school's work, including teaching, assessment, curriculum and monitoring. The school has not addressed effectively two of the main key issues from the last inspection. These were concerned with developing greater consistency in teaching between year groups and with developing the monitoring and evaluation skills of subject co-ordinators.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Pupils' achievement is **good** overall.

Pupils' standards of attainment on entry to the nursery are higher than those typical for their age. Throughout the Foundation Stage they achieve very well due to very good teaching. By the time they enter Year 1, most children have attained or exceeded the goals expected in all areas of learning.

Since 2001, the high standards previously attained by pupils at the end of Year 2 in national tests, compared with similar schools, have been declining overall in reading, writing and mathematics. The standards attained by the current Year 2 indicate that the downward trend has been halted with pupils generally working at above average levels. The achievement of pupils in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory.

The table below indicates that, in the 2004 national tests at the end of Year 6, pupils attained well above average standards in English and science. Standards in mathematics were very high and in the top 5 per cent nationally. Pupils currently in Years 3 to 6 achieve well, particularly in Year 6, where standards closely reflect the results of the 2004 national tests.

Year 6 results

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

Pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **very good** overall. Their cultural development is good. Pupils’ attitudes are very good and their behaviour is good. Attendance is very good and well above the national average.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The overall quality of education is **satisfactory**. Teaching and learning are **good**. Teaching is particularly effective in the nursery and reception years and in Year 6. In Years 1 and 2, it is satisfactory. Teachers working together, usually from the same year groups, employ some very imaginative ways of making learning interesting and relevant for the pupils. The lack of a whole-school co-ordinated approach to the management and development of teaching and learning has prompted individual teachers to devise their own ways of working. The consequent variations in practice between classes and year groups do not contribute to the steady promotion of pupils’ learning as they move up through the school. Further inconsistency, found in the assessment of pupils’ progress and achievement and in the implementation of the curriculum, results in instances of unsatisfactory practice. The provision for pupils’ care, welfare, health and safety is satisfactory overall, but the school does not meet statutory requirements in its implementation of child protection procedures. Links with parents are satisfactory overall.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **poor** overall. The leadership of the headteacher is poor. This results in inconsistent practice throughout the school, limiting its overall effectiveness, its capacity to improve and the work of other members of staff with management and leadership responsibilities. The management of the school and its resources is poor overall.

The work of the governing body is unsatisfactory and it fails to meet all its statutory requirements.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents' views of the school are less than positive. Parents show a keen interest in their children's education. They are supportive of the school and many are actively involved in its day-to-day life. Most parents are pleased with the standards at the end of Year 6. However, a significant number of parents are worried about the inconsistencies in the school's practice and feel their views are not always heard. While parents find teachers approachable and supportive, they are worried by the headteacher's perceived reluctance to deal with their concerns over important issues. Pupils like their school and their teachers and are keen to do well.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- take decisive and urgent action to resolve permanently the serious weaknesses in the leadership and management of the school and the long-term breakdown in the relationship between the headteacher and the staff;
- instigate a full, detailed and independent audit of the school's finances and act upon its recommendations to improve the financial procedures;
- design and introduce rigorous and reliable monitoring and self-evaluation procedures involving all senior staff and subject co-ordinators;
- create and implement management and support systems and procedures, ensuring their consistent use throughout the school to eradicate the considerable variations in practice in many aspects of its work;
- raise the standards attained in Years 1 and 2;
- Create and implement effective and reliable assessment procedures.

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- implement fully the required procedures for child protection.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Achievement and standards are good overall. Children in the nursery and reception classes achieve very well. The standards attained by the end of the reception year are above those expected for their age. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve satisfactorily and by the end of Year 2 attain standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science that are above average overall. Pupils achieve well in Years 3 to 6 and attain high standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. Pupils with special educational needs, those for whom English is not their first language and higher attaining pupils achieve as well as other pupils of the same age.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in Year 6 make rapid progress and attain high standards at the end of Year 6 due to determined and focused teaching.
- Standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science in Years 1 and 2 have declined over recent years.
- The very good achievement of children in the nursery and reception classes is due to very effective teaching.

Commentary

1. When children first join the school in the nursery their level of attainment is mainly above that typical for their age. Very effective teaching and a well organised approach to the planning of the children's learning helps to ensure that they achieve very well and that their attainment in all areas of learning is above average by the time they move on to Year 1. At this stage in their education, most children are reaching or exceeding the expected standards for their age (the early learning goals) in all areas of learning.
2. From this positive starting point, pupils in Years 1 and 2 make satisfactory progress in reading, writing and mathematics and attain standards that are generally above average by the end of Year 2. Since 2000, the attainment of pupils in national assessments at the end of Year 2 has declined overall, although there has been a recent halt to the decline, particularly in the case of writing. The trend in the school's overall Year 2 results since 2000, when compared with the national picture, has been below average. This decline has occurred even though the attainment of pupils entering Year 1 has not changed significantly during this period. This downward trend is also reflected when the results are compared with those of pupils in similar schools nationally.
3. Pupils' current work indicates that the standards attained in science at the end of Year 2 are above average. However, teacher assessments are insecure and tend to deflate the attainment of pupils and provide a confusing picture of their progress.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
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reading	16.8 (16.9)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	16.2 (14.7)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	16.9 (16.9)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 60 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

4. The standards attained by the current Year 6 pupils in English, mathematics and science are high. When these pupils were in Year 2, they attained standards in national assessments that were well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Consequently, they have made good progress and achieved well during Years 3 to 6.
5. The inspection findings reflect the Year 6 national test results in English, mathematics and science over recent years. Since 2000, the results have generally been high when compared with all schools nationally and with similar schools. This is a good, consistent trend, which is above the average for schools nationally. This achievement has not been accomplished through robust and consistent school support systems and processes, but through the individual efforts of highly professional teachers, often working in relative isolation or in informal groups.

Key Stage 2

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	29.5 (27.9)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	30.8 (30.6)	27.0 (26.8)
science	31.1 (32.2)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 55 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

6. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 make good progress, particularly in Year 6 where their progress is rapid and they benefit from teaching that is consistently very good.
7. Recent improvements in the provision for ICT are starting to have a positive effect upon pupils' progress. As a result, pupils achieve well and standards are good throughout the school. Religious education was not included as part of this inspection. There was insufficient evidence gathered during the inspection to make a secure judgement about the standards in physical education, apart from swimming where standards are good. In all other subjects, pupils are working at levels generally above those expected for their age.
8. Pupils with special educational needs, those for whom English is not their first language and higher attaining pupils achieve as well as all other pupils of a similar age as they move up through the school. Pupils in the nursery and reception class whose first language is not English are well supported, although there is very limited specialist assistance available. These pupils gain a good command of spoken English by the time they move into Year 1 and are, thereafter, able to take a full and active part in all lessons.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes to their work and towards others in the school are **very good**. Behaviour is **good**. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **very good** overall. Pupils' attendance is **very good** and punctuality is **satisfactory**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the Foundation Stage settle well into school routines and are quick to learn to work and play together.
- Pupils' very good attitude towards their life at school has a positive effect upon their overall progress.
- Pupils' confidence and self-esteem are very good.
- The school's approach to dealing with bullying is inconsistent and is ineffective at times.
- Pupils' behaviour is good, but this represents a decline since the last inspection.
- Well-planned activities effectively promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Commentary

9. Pupils' behaviour is good. Playtimes are friendly and secure, but expectations of behaviour vary from class to class because of a lack of any overall consistent school direction or managed approach. This has resulted in a general decline from the very good behaviour found at the time of the last inspection. Whilst a number of parents feel that their children had been bullied or harassed at school, most pupils feel that this is not an issue. However, it does occur and some pupils feel that their concerns are not listened to or taken seriously by the headteacher. Sound procedures are in place for following up racism or other forms of harassment. There have been no exclusions since the last inspection.
10. Pupils like their school and take a full part in it. They are interested in their work and keen to achieve well. Well-planned induction procedures, combined with a secure caring atmosphere, enable children in the Foundation Stage to settle quickly into the routines of school life. They are given very good opportunities to exercise choice in their learning activities. Opportunities to work independently elsewhere in the school are very variable due to the lack of a clear direction and guidance by the school's leadership.
11. Despite the large number of pupils and the low adult to pupil ratio in both playgrounds, pupils play happily and safely. Most teachers are quick to praise pupils who behave well or achieve activities successfully. This is very effective in reinforcing good conduct and work, whilst helping to raise pupils' self esteem and confidence.
12. Relationships between teachers and pupils are generally very strong and trusting. In some classes, pupils have good opportunities to exercise leadership and take responsibility. Here again, a lack of a co-ordinated approach leads to inconsistencies across the school. The school council provides pupils with opportunities to take responsibility, although the overall responsibility remains with a member of staff.
13. All pupils have a good understanding of the difference between right and wrong. They know about their local community and have a sense of the wider world. Their knowledge is effectively developed through well-planned activities such as multi-cultural week and European week when pupils learn from first hand experience about the food, culture and way of life in other countries. In some subjects, such as music, very good levels of spiritual development are to be found.

Attendance

14. Attendance is very good and is well above the national average. Rewards are given to those pupils with 100 per cent attendance. Most parents support the school's efforts to maintain regular attendance. Some pupils arrive late for school, but this does not disrupt the smooth start to lessons.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 2003/2004

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	3.8	School data:	0.0
National data:	5.1	National data:	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a **satisfactory** quality of education. Teaching and learning are **good** overall. Assessment procedures are unsatisfactory. The curriculum is satisfactory overall. Enrichment activities are good. Procedures for pupils' care, welfare and safety are satisfactory overall. Links with parents and the community are satisfactory, but are good with other schools.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning are **good** overall. It is very good in the nursery and reception and in Year 6. It is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. Assessment is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching in Years 6 is very focused and prepares the pupils for national tests well.
- Teaching in the nursery and reception classes is very well managed and very effectively addresses the needs of all pupils
- There is a lack of a whole-school co-ordinated approach to developing teaching and learning
- Assessment procedures are mainly informal, very inconsistent and do not give pupils a clear picture of how they can improve consistency.
- Teaching is often very imaginative and makes learning relevant and fun

Commentary

15. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. In Year 6 it is particularly effective and well focused on ensuring that pupils attain high standards in the national tests in English, mathematics and science. Teaching is also very good in the Foundation Stage (nursery and reception classes). Here teachers employ a well-organised and planned approach that enables pupils to achieve very well and to attain standards that are above average in all areas of learning by the time they move to Year 1. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory overall and includes some teaching of good quality. The overall effectiveness of teaching is limited by the inconsistent assessment procedures and approaches to teaching and learning. Pupils in Years 3 to 5 make good overall progress due to the mainly good teaching they receive. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed during the inspection.
16. The teaching of pupils with special education needs and those for whom English is not their first language is good overall. Teachers and teaching assistants provide a good level of support and help to ensure that these pupils achieve as well as all other pupils of the same age and are fully involved in all school activities.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 35 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (3%)	13 (37%)	14 (40%)	7 (20%)	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.

17. Teaching is good overall despite the very low morale of teachers and support staff. This situation has resulted because of the long-term breakdown in the relationship between the staff as a whole and the headteacher. The overall effectiveness of teaching in the school is the result of the determined professionalism of individual members of staff, often working in isolation or in informal groups. At the time of the last inspection, teaching was judged to be very good overall. Although current judgements show a decline, it is testament to the teachers' dedication that the overall quality has remained as high as it is, especially considering the overall lack of support, guidance and structure within which they work.
18. The school does not have a clear and co-ordinated approach to managing and developing teaching and learning. This is unsatisfactory. To overcome this lack of a whole-school approach, teachers have developed their own ways of working, leading to the introduction of some highly effective and individual systems of good quality. However, this has resulted in an inconsistency of approach, practice and systems across the school, which does not support the smooth progression of pupils as they move up through the school. Teachers with classes of the same age tend to work closely together, especially in planning the pupils' work. This has been effective in helping to ensure that pupils in the same school year receive similar educational experiences.
19. Teachers strive to make pupils' learning exciting, challenging and fun. Many activities take place that enrich the pupils' learning. For example, teachers spend considerable time planning special days, such as the 'Ancient Greek Day'. Here pupils and staff dress as ancient Greeks and spend the day exploring and learning about how Greeks lived in the past. These types of activities capture the pupils' imagination and make their learning relevant and enjoyable. Pupils talked with great enthusiasm about such experiences.
20. At the Foundation Stage, assessment procedures are very well developed and are very effectively used to inform teachers about the children's progress and attainment and to guide their planning to ensure that activities focus on pupils' learning needs. In Years 1 to 6, the procedures for assessing pupils' progress and attainment are inconsistent. Individual class teachers do know their pupils' capabilities well and know how well they are progressing from day to day, but these procedures are generally informal and rely heavily on the individual teacher's memory. There is no reliable and robust school system for assessment or for the tracking of pupils' longer-term achievements. Teachers have developed their own ways of recording pupils' achievements, but this leads to inconsistencies across the school. Assessment records of pupils' progress, achievements and targets are not passed on from class to class as pupils move up through the school, which inhibits the continuity of pupils' learning. The school does have a marking policy, but teachers are generally unfamiliar with its content and it has no overall impact upon practice. As a consequence, marking practices are very variable throughout the school ranging from very good to unsatisfactory and are unsatisfactory overall.

The curriculum

The curriculum is **satisfactory** overall, although there are a number of notable weaknesses. Enrichment activities are **good**. Accommodation and resources are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum for pupils in the Foundation Stage is rich and stimulating.

- The curriculum is enlivened with events and educational visits.
- The good provision for pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language helps to ensure that they achieve as well as other pupils of the same age.
- There is no systematic approach to the monitoring of curriculum provision and its effectiveness, resulting in inconsistent provision across the school.
- The organisation of the curriculum does not support the development of links between different subjects.
- Extra-curricular activities enhance provision well in sport.

Commentary

21. Curriculum provision is inconsistent due to the ineffective leadership and management of the school. Inspection evidence shows that individual teachers provide a broad curriculum for all pupils, which is at least satisfactory and in many cases good. However, the curriculum has not been reviewed regularly or updated to take account of new developments. In discussions, teachers identified the need to review the use of curriculum time. Inspection findings confirm their views. The school's focus on published results at the end of Year 6 places an over emphasis on the practising of tests to the detriment of learning in other subjects.
22. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their first language are well supported by members of staff who work to ensure that what they are taught closely matches their developing learning needs. This aspect of the school's provision is well managed by the deputy headteacher.
23. The school does not have a single system for planning pupils' work. This leads to inconsistencies across the school, which were identified at the time of the last inspection. Units of work are effectively planned but, as a consequence of ineffective monitoring, insufficient use is made of the links between subjects to enhance learning. There is no system in place for the development of literacy, numeracy and ICT skills across the curriculum.
24. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is very good. Teachers' knowledge of the curriculum and planning procedures are very good. This results in a rich curriculum that is well matched to children's needs because effective use is made of well-developed assessment procedures. The highly skilled teachers provide well-chosen learning experiences, building on children's first-hand experience of life.
25. Subject leaders work with great energy to make the curriculum relevant and exciting and to promote their subjects. For instance, a well-planned science week provided pupils with a wealth of additional experiences that they recall with genuine enthusiasm. Teachers devise events, such as the recent Greek day, that enrich the pupils' experience of school and impact positively on their learning.
26. Sport makes a significant contribution to the curriculum, providing well-attended after-school clubs in football, rugby, netball and athletics. The pupils' achievements have been celebrated in a professionally produced newsletter, highlighting successes for cross-country, girls' football, tag rugby and athletics. External coaches for cricket and tennis have worked with the pupils during the year, enhancing the PE curriculum. Parents provide strong support for sporting activities and contribute to learning by helping in classes.

Care, guidance and support

Procedures for pupils' care, welfare and safety are **satisfactory** overall, but statutory child protection requirements are not met. Support, advice and guidance are **satisfactory**. The steps taken to involve pupils in the work and development of the school are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils feel safe and secure in the care of their teachers.
- The school does not meet child protection requirements.
- Teachers and support staff understand their pupils well and have built good and trusting relationships with them.

Commentary

27. There are strengths and weaknesses in the school's procedures to ensure pupils' care, welfare, health, and safety. Overall, teachers and support staff take good care of their pupils who, in turn, feel safe and secure within school. Good efforts are made to find out about pupils' health needs when they join school and the administration of medicines follows clear guidelines. Fire drills are held regularly and teachers carry out risk assessments for all outside activities. However, there has been no recent child protection training for teaching and support staff. This training has not taken place because the headteacher has not considered it to be relevant in St Gregory's School, even though it is a statutory requirement. Consequently, the school is currently failing to meet statutory requirements to ensure that comprehensive arrangements for child protection are in place.
28. There are very warm and respectful relationships between teachers, support staff and the pupils. Pupils told inspectors how kind their teachers were and how well they supported them in lessons. They never worry about asking for help when they are stuck or if they are worried. Teachers use praise and smile readily so that pupils of all abilities feel able to make a contribution in lessons. This makes a real difference to pupils' self-esteem and ensures that pupils blossom and mature by the time they leave the school. The effectiveness of the support and guidance provided for pupils is restricted by the unsatisfactory assessment procedures that are often informal and rely upon the memory of individual teachers. Teachers make every possible effort to get to know their pupils' strengths and weaknesses well so that each child receives the help it needs, although this is not always formally and systematically recorded.
29. Induction arrangements for children first starting at the school in the nursery are very good and these procedures help children to settle into school life quickly and to feel confident and assured from the outset.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents are **satisfactory**. Links with the community are **satisfactory**. Links with other schools are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are keen to support their own and other children's education.
- Although many parents are pleased with standards, some parents are concerned about inconsistencies in the school's practices
- Parents find teachers very approachable and helpful, but are worried by the headteacher's perceived reluctance to deal with their concerns on a number of important issues.
- The school and the church work closely together.
- The good links with other schools helps to provide a broader range of educational experiences for the pupils.

Commentary

30. The vast majority of parents are very supportive of the school and actively help in many areas of school life. Several parents help in the classroom by supporting small groups and listening to readers. In addition, they accompany children on outside trips. Even more parents support extra-curricular activities, many of which would not function without their active support. An enthusiastic parents' association works tirelessly for the school's benefit, a shining example of which is their excellent football club, involving upwards of 100 pupils. Parent's association activities are well supported by staff.
31. Many parents are pleased with the standards achieved, with levels of homework and with information provided by teachers, particularly about their children's progress. Pupils' annual reports are comprehensive and give an indication of the levels pupils are working towards. Parents like the regular newsletters and welcome the recent introduction of a sports newsletter that keeps them informed about the school's considerable prowess in sporting activities. Parents are full of praise for the many teachers who go that extra mile to help them support their children's learning at home. However, some parents complained about a lack of consistency throughout the school, which leads to variations in the progress their children make. These inconsistencies are apparent in the school and are due to a lack of overall leadership and a centrally managed and co-coordinated approach to teaching, learning, the curriculum and areas such as homework.
32. Parents are quick to praise the dedication and commitment of the teachers whom they find helpful and approachable. Many parents would like to have the same close links with the headteacher and would welcome her higher profile in the playground at the start and end of each day and at school functions. At the pre-inspection meeting with parents, in the parents' questionnaires and during the inspection, parents expressed concern at the headteacher's perceived reluctance to deal with their concerns. Parents feel that their comments are received politely, but rarely result in action. Parents are also puzzled by the headteacher's perceived reluctance to discuss important issues with them. Although parents' links with the headteacher are unsatisfactory, parents have good links with the deputy headteacher and members of staff. Overall, therefore, links with parents are judged to be satisfactory.
33. There are very strong links with the local church and the whole school makes regular visits to church to attend Mass. Links with the local community are satisfactory overall. Some teachers make good use of the local area to extend pupils' learning and visitors from the local community come into school to support various aspects of the curriculum. These have a positive impact upon the progress pupils make through the provision of additional resources and facilities. There are good links with feeder secondary schools, which provide good curriculum support for the school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are **poor** overall. The leadership and of the headteacher is **poor**. Governance of the school is **unsatisfactory**. The leadership of the deputy headteacher and other senior staff is **satisfactory**, in spite of difficult circumstances. The management of the school is **poor** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher's poor leadership and management have resulted in the long-term, irretrievable breakdown in her relationship with the school staff.
 - The management and use of the school's finances are poor.
 - The effectiveness of the leadership of the deputy head and other senior members of staff has been severely limited because of the management style of the headteacher.
 - The governing body has been indecisive and failed to tackle difficult, long-term leadership and management problems.
 - The lack of effective monitoring procedures significantly limits the school's understanding of its performance.
34. The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory. Teaching and learning are of a good overall quality with pupils achieving well and attaining high standards by the end of Year 6. This level of provision is entirely due to the dedication of the hardworking members of staff, who have for many years worked under considerable stress in a difficult atmosphere, which fills many with considerable apprehension. This situation is the result of the long-term breakdown in the relationship between the headteacher and the staff of the school. The inspection findings confirm a low state of morale amongst adults in the school and their total lack of confidence in the leadership of the headteacher. The staff expressed real concern and a genuine fear of recrimination following the inspection because they were speaking out about the situation in the school.
35. Most managers and co-ordinators have little authority and rarely participate in major decision making, such as the school's self-evaluation process. They are rarely encouraged or supported by the headteacher in their duties and generally work in small self-constructed teams, but with no overall cohesion. Many staff stated that the headteacher did not know what they were doing or what was happening in the school. Overall, inspection findings confirm this situation. This lack of a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses by the headteacher limits the capacity of the school to improve. The senior managers do, however, have a good general understanding of what needs to be done to move the school forward, but have been restrained by the overall leadership and management of the school.
36. The senior managers and subject co-ordinators have high aspirations and work with considerable purpose for the benefit of all pupils. This is in spite of many obstacles, including substantial difficulties in obtaining funding for identified priorities. They are good role models for the pupils who have never been aware of the considerable and long-term problems within the school. This is due in no small measure to the pastoral support offered by the deputy headteacher, who in addition carries an enormous range of responsibilities, but with very little say in decision making.
37. A significant number of parents and governors expressed grave reservations about aspects of the headteacher's leadership. The inspection agrees with many of these concerns.
38. The governance of the school is unsatisfactory. The governing body does not meet the statutory requirement concerned with child protection procedures. The governors do not operate as a corporate body. Important information is not shared with all governors and this undermines the decision-making process. A significant number of governors expressed their dissatisfaction with the working practices of the governing body and their frustration at being unable to do anything about it. The governing body does not have a clear and accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses, which severely restricts its ability to set an overall direction for the school's development. This is mainly because the governors rely upon the inaccurate information provided by the headteacher. The governing body has been aware for

many years, both formally and informally, of the serious leadership, management and relationship problems very evident in the school. It has failed to take decisive action to rectify the situation. The governing body sets the school's budget, but its procedures for monitoring the financial expenditure of the school are ineffective and have failed to identify irregularities and misuse of the budget.

39. The school's self-evaluation, prepared for the inspection by the headteacher, is unrealistic and inaccurate, especially in its analysis of trends in standards. The monitoring of the school's performance, including teaching, learning and the tracking of individual pupils' progress and achievements, is inconsistent and poor overall.
40. The headteacher's poor management has resulted in considerable inconsistencies in many aspects of the school's work. There are inadequate opportunities for staff professional development to bring about improvements in overall performance. The workload of staff is poorly managed and has added to the low staff morale and high staff turnover in recent years. A bright spot has been the successful induction of staff new to the school, especially newly qualified teachers, who follow effective procedures that are well managed by the deputy headteacher.
41. The approach to the financial management of the school is a blurred picture. The headteacher takes most financial decisions, with some reference to the chair of the finance committee. Decisions are not always transparent to other staff. The school's financial documents show that there are irregularities in the use of the money provided to the school for the education of pupils. These transactions have taken place without the knowledge or consent of the governing body. In addition, school documents concerning school equipment show irregularities.
42. During the inspection, the school was unable to provide accurate financial information to enable the completion of the table below.

Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income		Balance from previous year	
Total expenditure		Balance carried forward to the next	
Expenditure per pupil			

43. This school has serious weaknesses that are mainly associated with its leadership, management and governance. However, members of the staff provide a satisfactory quality of education, teaching and learning are good overall and pupils achieve well and attain high standards by the time they move to secondary education. When these strengths and weaknesses are considered together, the school is judged to provide satisfactory value for money overall.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **very good**.

44. The very good provision in the Foundation Stage has been maintained well since the last inspection. Children's attainment on entry is above that typically found for their age. There is one nursery class and two reception classes. Children enter the nursery in the September of the school year in which they are four and one of the reception classes in the September of the school year in which they are five. The quality of teaching and learning is very good and as a result children achieve very well. The teachers have a good knowledge of how young children learn. They have high expectations of the children and the good deployment of well-trained teaching assistants extends and supports learning in an effective way. By the time they enter Year 1, children overall are attaining standards above average, with most children reaching or exceeding the nationally expected early learning goals in all areas of learning.
45. The curriculum is very good. Very effective cross-curricular work helps children to make secure links in different areas of learning. Well-organised planning provides meaningful activities and very thorough assessment, monitoring and tracking of children's activities, ensure that all children benefit from their experiences in the secure, welcoming atmosphere of the classroom. There is a high degree of independent learning, with all children confident and beginning to have some understanding of their own learning.
46. The accommodation is good. The classrooms are small but benefit from a secure outdoor area, which enhances the indoor provision. Children with special educational needs and those who do not speak English as their first language achieve very well because of the good support they receive from an early stage. Induction procedures are very good and form a sound basis for strong relationships with parents.
47. The members of staff work very well together as a team. Their sensitive intervention helps all children to succeed. In the main, the co-ordinator leads and manages the Foundation Stage as a separate unit. As such, she is less restricted than other co-ordinators in the school and has been able to implement a programme of monitoring as part of a self-evaluation process. Consequently, the leadership and management are very good.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Adults provide very good role models of caring and considerate behaviour.
- Children are given choices to help them learn to play and become more independent.
- Staff have very good knowledge of the children's needs and give this area of learning high priority in all teaching plans.

Commentary

48. Children enter the Foundation Stage with attainment above the national average in this area of learning. The quality of teaching and learning is very good in both the nursery and reception classes and, as a result, children's achievement is very good. Members of staff are very skilful at planning stimulating experiences to capture the children's interest. These help the children develop concentration skills so that even nursery children sustain attention and remain on task, often for quite extensive periods of time. Children separate from their parents and carers easily.
49. There is a very settled atmosphere in both the nursery and reception classes. Children quickly become totally engrossed in the well-planned activities. They work with a high level of independence and have very good knowledge and understanding of their learning. Staff work hard to reinforce good learning attitudes. Effective questioning skills encourage children to make links in learning and to work things out for themselves within a well-structured framework for learning. Children are trained well to tidy up after activities. Nursery children learn about hygiene as they wash their hands after playing in the sand or after using the toilet. Children are happy in school and join in activities willingly and co-operatively. They wait patiently to take their turn and take responsibility for tidying up, dressing and undressing themselves. They work and play collaboratively, benefiting from a wide variety of activities, planned to develop increasing co-operation. As a result, children become more involved and confident in learning, often willingly taking responsibility for their own learning.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff have high expectations of what young children can do, which results in pupils' achieving very well.
- Staff effectively model the use of language as a tool for thinking.

Commentary

50. With the exception of a few children with special educational needs, most children come into the nursery speaking clearly, audibly and with confidence. Good questioning skills enable children to reflect on what is being discussed and to structure their thinking. Pupils in nursery class talk willingly about what they have learned, such as explaining the stages of development from egg to chick and are able to write their names on the road signs that they make.
51. Children really enjoy their learning. In the reception classes they are beginning to write their own stories independently. They enjoy books, recognising simple words and showing a secure knowledge of the sounds associated with the letters. Regular story times increase children's awareness of books and their enjoyment of stories. The children are given opportunities to develop secure early reading and writing skills in small closely targeted groups. By the end of the reception year, the high expectations of the teachers have helped to ensure that most children have achieved very well and are in line to reach or exceed the goals expected by the time they move to Year 1.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's learning is made both exciting and enjoyable.
- Well-planned, interesting practical activities effectively support learning

Commentary

52. Staff plan activities that build on the children's experiences. This helps the learning to be both relevant and exciting. For example, children in the nursery learn to use the names of shapes and positional language as they make a map of their journey to the farm. Outside they match the number chosen to the number of the bike they will ride. In the reception class children transfer data collected on their traffic survey onto a pictogram. Very good direct teaching enables children to become secure enough to independently record number sentences in subtraction. Children are working at full capacity all the time. The teachers' very good questioning extends the children's learning by making them think and explain their answers and ideas. Activities are very well planned to meet the learning needs of all children. As a result, children achieve very well and most to reach or exceed the goals they are expected to by the end of the reception year.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children enjoy a wide range of interesting activities that gives them an increasing number of experiences of their own world.
- Staff use questioning very effectively to enhance the children's knowledge and understanding of the world about them.

Commentary

53. Teaching and learning are very good and children achieve very well. Imaginatively planned activities support learning well, stimulate children's curiosity and enhance their understanding. Through skilful use of questioning and sensitive interaction by the teacher, the younger children are encouraged to use their speaking and listening skills as they plan their journey from nursery to the farm. African land snails, tortoises and chicks, which the children have incubated, provide children in the nursery with very good opportunities to find out about living things. Children in the reception classes investigate living creatures as they pond dip the fish brought in from the fishmongers. Small world toys extend early experiences beyond the home and school, giving children the opportunity to make sense of a widening community. Children are confident in their use of computer programs, using the Internet, with support, to identify pond life. As a result children achieve very well and most reach or exceed the goals they are expected to by the end of the reception year

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Learning in the outside classroom is effectively planned to give children a good variety of stimulating activities.
- A good range of strategies challenge and inspire the learning needs of all children.

Commentary

54. As a result of very good and well planned learning activities in the nursery, children show good levels of physical control in their movements as they pedal their wheeled toys outside and as they draw, write and handle tape, scissors and glue in their activities inside. This good start to children's learning is effectively built upon in the reception classes through well-considered activities. For example, reception children in the hall move with confidence and respond well to the challenges from the teacher, which result in very high levels of engagement as they balance on high benches, bars and tables, with confidence. Because teachers are adept at making very strong links with language development and their knowledge and understanding of the outside world, children know which muscles are being stretched and exercised. All children achieve very well, developing skills quickly and securely. They develop their manipulative skills well by handling dough, scissors and brushes, and manipulate small construction equipment with dexterity. Very good teaching ensures that children achieve very well with most reach or exceed the goals children are expected to reach by the end of reception in this area of learning.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A wide range of imaginatively planned activities extends the children's experience.
- Very good attention is paid to the development of fine motorskills.
- Role-play and other well planned and stimulating activities encourage the children to use their imagination.

Commentary

55. The quality of teaching and learning is very good and children achieve very well. A very well planned curriculum, together with a wide variety of materials and media, allows children to explore colour, texture, shape and form, using different tools with safety. They gain great enjoyment as they experiment with colour in their paintings. In the reception, the teacher's commitment and enthusiasm created a very positive working atmosphere and, as a result, children had the confidence to try new skills. In the role-play area they form their own band, completely independently, turning on a music tape and beating their percussion instruments in perfect time to the music. Very good teaching ensures that children achieve very well, with most reaching or exceeding the goals children are expected to attain by the end of reception in this area of learning.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in Years 3 to 6 due to good teaching.
- Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by teachers and support assistants.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to their learning.
- The overall leadership of the school restrict the effectiveness of the English co-ordinator's management of the subject.
- Inconsistencies in the assessment procedures result in an unclear picture of pupils' progress and attainment.
- Standards at the end of Year 2 have started to rise following a decline over recent years.

Commentary

56. The Year 2 national assessments in 2004 show that pupils attained above average standards in reading and well above average standards in writing. This represents an improvement in the results for writing, which had declined from well above average in 2001 to average in 2002 and 2003. Inspection findings reflect the school's own assessments for 2005 and indicate that pupils achieve satisfactorily overall during Years 1 and 2 and attain standards that are above average. At the time of the last inspection, the standards were well above average for both reading and writing.
57. In the 2004 national tests, the Year 6 pupils attained standards that were well above average when compared with all schools nationally and with similar schools, based on their prior attainment. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 achieve well and inspection findings indicate that pupils currently in Year 6 are working at levels that are well above average overall. The school's own assessments for these pupils show similar results.
58. When pupils first enter Year 1, their speaking and listening skills are good. From this good start, teachers throughout the school effectively build on these skills through well-planned activities in general lessons and in lessons specifically designed for the purpose. Overall, pupils are confident speakers and show good listening skills.
59. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are well supported, especially by very competent and sensitive support assistants, and this helps to ensure that these pupils achieve as well as other pupils of the same age in the school.
60. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6, especially in Year 6 where it is often very good. Teachers have taken effective steps to stop the decline in standards in Years 1 and 2, especially in writing. This has been achieved through teachers raising their expectation of what pupils can achieve and through targeting more consistently the quality of writing in the school. The best teaching, observed several times in Year 6, is challenging, lively and imaginative and encourages the independent learning skills of pupils. Teaching and learning are less successful when lessons lose pace and the pupils become restless and are not encouraged to work at tasks sufficiently quickly. Teachers have good supportive relationships with pupils and this is a major contributory factor in the pupils' very good attitude towards their work. The use of information communication technology to support learning in English is inconsistent across the school.
61. The leadership of English is satisfactory because the subject leader has been successful in guiding the recent improvement in Years 1 and 2. However, management of English is unsatisfactory because there has been no monitoring of standards or teaching and learning for a year. This is in part due to the restriction placed upon the subject leader by the overall school leadership and management. Although some assessment procedures are in place, there is insufficient consistency across the school to provide a clear picture of the progress

of individual pupils. Resources are adequate overall, partly because the parents' association is making regular and substantial donations for the purchase of books.

62. The overall provision in English has declined since the last inspection. Consequently, improvement has been unsatisfactory.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

63. Pupils generally have satisfactory opportunities in other subjects to develop their literacy skills. This is seen most often in the way that teachers develop pupils' speaking skills in history, science and mathematics. Reading skills are being improved in other subjects, but this is inconsistent and generally unplanned. Some extended writing is encouraged and helps learning, but there is an overuse of worksheets in some subjects, which does not encourage the development of writing skills.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Year 6 pupils achieve high standards due to very good teaching.
- Standards at the end of Year 2 are above average, but have declined over recent years.
- Pupils have a very good attitude towards their work, which has a positive effect upon their overall progress.
- Assessment procedures overall are informal and do not provide reliable information about pupils' progress and attainment.
- The effectiveness of the subject leader is limited by weaknesses in the school's overall management.

Commentary

64. Overall, pupils achieve well in mathematics and attain standards well above average by the time they transfer to secondary education. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their first language achieve as well as other pupils of the same age.
65. The school's assessment of pupils currently at the end of Year 2 indicates that standards in mathematics are generally above average and that pupils have achieved satisfactorily. However, the school's assessments show that the results are likely to be below those of similar schools for the second year running. Inspection findings indicate a similar picture.
66. There has been a gradual decline in the standards attained by pupils at the end of Year 2 in national assessments since 2000, although they stabilised in 2004 at a level broadly above the national average. When the results are compared with similar schools over the same period, they show a year-on-year decline from well above average in 2000 to below average in 2004. This decline has occurred even though the attainment of pupils entering Year 1 has remained above average during this period.
67. Pupils attain very high standards in national tests at the end of Year 6. This very high standard is confirmed by the inspection findings and has been maintained in national tests for Year 6 pupils since 2002. When the current Year 6 pupils were in Year 2 (2001), they attained results in national assessments that were well above average (A). Consequently,

over the four years (Years 3 to 6) they have achieved well to attain results that are very high (A*).

68. The quality of teaching overall is good. It is very good for the older pupils and this helps to ensure that they attain high standards in national tests. The scrutiny of Year 6 pupils' current and previous work provides a clear picture of a consistently systematic approach to the teaching of the subject throughout the academic year. It shows that pupils have been effectively challenged, that their specific needs have been well catered for and that they have achieved very well.
69. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 work predominantly on photocopied worksheets in mathematics that are rarely dated or kept in any specific order. As a consequence, the scrutiny of their work could not provide any secure evidence about the quality of teaching, pupils' achievement or the standards they attain, either currently or over the academic year. Limited lesson observations undertaken during the inspection in Years 1 and 2 indicate that teaching is often of good quality, but satisfactory overall. An analysis of the results of national assessments at the end of Year 2, confirm that teaching is satisfactory overall and that pupils make satisfactory progress.
70. Pupils throughout the school have a very positive attitude towards their work in mathematics. They speak with enthusiasm and great confidence about what they have achieved in the subject. They are well behaved in lessons and work well in groups and independently. They take an active part in whole-class activities in the knowledge that their contributions will be valued.
71. Overall, assessment is unsatisfactory. Assessment procedures in Years 1 and 2 are generally informal and mainly rely upon the memory of teachers. This does not provide a reliable and secure base on which to assess pupils' progress and achievements or ensure that work is effectively planned to move pupils on from what they know and understand. The organisation of pupils' work means that it cannot be used as a record of a pupils' progress or attainment.
72. The leadership of mathematics is satisfactory. However, the management is unsatisfactory because the regime of the school seriously restricts the development of the subject and the work and effectiveness of the co-ordinator. For example, the co-ordinator for mathematics and Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2) co-ordinator have not had full access to the results and analysis of national assessments and tests. The headteacher has not drawn to their attention or held any discussion with them about the year-on-year decline in standards in Years 1 and 2. The headteacher informed the inspectors that attainment at the end of Year 2 was not a priority as long as pupils achieved well at the end of Year 6. As a result, the school has taken no planned action to address the fall in standards. In addition, whilst the subject co-ordinator's role includes monitoring teaching and learning, no time has been provided for this to take place. Consequently, no effective and systematic monitoring has taken place since 2003. The lack of a whole-school managed approach to the leadership of subjects has resulted in the co-ordinator for mathematics using her own initiative well, resulting in the development of her own systems and procedures, which have raised the profile of the subject within the school.
73. Improvement since the last inspection is unsatisfactory because of the decline in the overall provision and the standards attained at the end of Year 2 in national tests.

Mathematics across the curriculum

74. Overall, pupils' skills in mathematics are developed satisfactorily in other subjects. There are many examples of individual teachers developing the pupils' skills and knowledge in

mathematics in other subjects, such as in science in Year 6. However, there is no whole-school approach and this leads to inconsistency from class-to-class and year-to-year.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in Year 6 achieve very well because of very good and focused teaching.
- The achievement and attainment of pupils in Years 1 and 2 have declined since the last inspection.
- The assessment and tracking of pupils' progress is unreliable because of inconsistent procedures.
- The lack of monitoring and evaluation procedures leads to inconsistencies in practice

Commentary

75. In Years 1 and 2, pupils achieve satisfactorily. The 2004 teacher assessments at the end of Year 2 show that the pupils attain standards that are broadly average. However, teacher assessments are insecure and tend to deflate the attainment of pupils and provide a confusing picture of their progress. Inspection findings based on the pupils' current work indicate that attainment overall is above average by the end of Year 2. The 2005 teacher assessments do show an improvement on the 2004 results. During Years 3 to 6, the pupils achieve well, attaining standards in the Year 6 national tests that are well above average. Inspection judges that high standards have been maintained in the current Year 6.
76. The standards attained by Year 6 pupils are similar to those found at the time of the last inspection, but the attainment of pupils at the end of Year 2 has declined from well above to above average. The overall improvement since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory.
77. The quality of teaching and learning in science is good overall. In Years 1 and 2, teaching is satisfactory overall. However, many aspects of teaching are good and this is starting to have a positive impact upon pupils' rate of progress. The overall effectiveness of teaching is limited by the inconsistent assessment procedures, which do not provide an accurate picture of pupils' progress and attainment. Consequently, planned lesson activities do not always provide high levels of challenge for the pupils and this slows their overall rate of progress. Teaching throughout Years 3 to 6 is good overall. It is particularly effective in Year 6 in preparing pupils for the national tests. Here teachers have good subject knowledge and set work that effectively challenges the pupils and builds successfully upon their previous learning.
78. The overall assessment procedures are unsatisfactory. Teachers mark books regularly, but there are very few comments that help pupils to understand how well they have achieved and what they must focus on to improve further. Individual teachers assess pupils' levels of attainment within units of work, but progress is not tracked across the school. Teachers know their pupils well and have a sound overall knowledge of how individual pupils are progressing. However, there is no overall effective assessment process that supports the systematic recording of pupils' progress and attainment as they move up through the school.
79. The leadership of science is satisfactory. Management is unsatisfactory because the limitations placed upon the co-ordinator by the school's overall management and leadership restrict her ability to operate effectively. However, the enthusiasm of the science coordinator has raised the subject's profile within the school significantly. She has correctly identified some strengths and weaknesses in the science provision, including the need to improve the assessment and monitoring of pupils' progress to eradicate the inconsistencies across the school. The assessment of units of work has improved due to her actions. Performance data

available to the school has not been shared with the subject coordinator and this limits her understanding of emerging trends in achievement and attainment. As a consequence, it is difficult for her to take effective action to address emerging issues before they become serious problems. The lack of a whole-school strategy and support for subject co-ordinators is apparent in science as it is in other subjects and this restricts the co-ordinator's overall effectiveness.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well because of the good teaching overall.
- Unsatisfactory monitoring has resulted in inconsistencies in teaching and learning.
- The use of ICT across different subjects is unsatisfactory.
- Inconsistent assessment procedures restrict the school's ability to track pupils' progress as they move up through the school.

Commentary

80. Overall, pupils achieve well in ICT throughout the school and mainly work at levels above those expected for their age.
81. Pupils move into Year 1 with a good basic understanding of ICT. They build on this knowledge successfully and make good progress in Years 1 and 2. During these years, pupils are taught to use a growing repertoire of software applications, including word processing, controlling a programmable toy, creating charts and graphs, and carrying out research. This good rate of progress is maintained in Years 3 to 6 as teachers effectively develop pupils' confidence, understanding and skills in ICT.
82. The quality of teaching is good overall, but it is variable from class-to-class. For example, in the best lessons teachers are innovative in their use of ICT, choose engaging contexts for the work and effectively challenge pupils. This was very evident in a Year 6 class where pupils had made very good use of a digital camera to create highly original animated video clips of high quality. Where teaching is satisfactory, rather than good, it is mainly because insufficient account has been taken of what pupils already know and can do. This reduces the level of challenge in the activities provided and slows the pupils' overall rate of progress.
83. Assessment procedures are unsatisfactory overall. Improvements are being introduced which are starting to have a positive effect, but at the current time procedures remain inconsistent across the school. This results in teachers not having a clear picture of pupils' current and previous achievements, making it difficult for them to plan work that effectively challenges the pupils and help them to make progress that is consistently very good.
84. The leadership of the subject is satisfactory overall, but management is unsatisfactory because of the restrictions placed on the co-ordinator by the school's leadership and management. The subject leader has made every effort to monitor the effectiveness of provision in the subject. She has a good grasp of the strengths

and weaknesses of provision in ICT and a clear vision for the subject's future development. She is very aware of the inconsistencies in provision across the school, but is restricted in taking effective action to bring about improvements. The LEA has provided strong support and this has resulted in the development of a good range of software for use across the school. In the last year, the school has seen the introduction of interactive whiteboards and broadband Internet access, which are generally used effectively to promote pupils' learning. The part-time technician is effectively managed to ensure that the ICT systems are kept running and that new software is correctly loaded for use by pupils. The subject leader's dedicated efforts to review whole-school effectiveness have not received the unequivocal backing of the headteacher. As a result, there is currently no strategy to address the inconsistent practice. Consequently, improvement since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

85. There is currently no mechanism for the systematic planning and use of ICT across the curriculum. As a result, lesson plans frequently make no reference to ICT and opportunities are missed. Subject leaders in mathematics, English and science are all making positive contributions to the development of ICT in their subjects. However, this practice is very inconsistent and the use of ICT across the curriculum is unsatisfactory overall.

HUMANITIES

86. **Religious education** was not part of the inspection brief. Although **history** and **geography** were sampled, there is insufficient evidence from which to make secure judgements about provision in either subject. One lesson was observed in history, but none in geography. Indications from pupils' work are that standards are above those expected for pupils of their age. This generally reflects the findings of the previous inspection.
87. The evidence available shows that planning for the teaching of **geography** throughout the school takes good account of national guidance. Workshops, visits and 'whole world week' provide pupils with very good first-hand experiences, which enhance the curriculum. Some literacy skills are developed well, such as in Years 3 to 6 enter into debates about wide ranging topics from the building of the new Wembley Stadium to sustainable environments in Chembokoli.
88. In **history**, pupils have a good, detailed knowledge of how people lived in the past and can compare them with life today. Pupils have gained a particularly good understanding of life in ancient Greece, Egypt and Rome, and in England in the 1950s. The many interesting history-based displays, writing in pupils' books and discussions with pupils show that they are developing their skills and knowledge in the subject well as they move up through the school. Teachers give pupils good and exciting practical opportunities in their learning, such as the successful Ancient Greek Day seen in Year 4 during the inspection.
89. Pupils have very good attitudes to their learning in both history and geography because of the innovative way in which humanities are taught.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

90. These subjects were sampled during the inspection, but not in sufficient detail to make secure judgements on provision. No lessons were seen in design and technology and physical education. One lesson was seen in art and design and three in music. The overall quality of the lessons seen was good.
91. As **physical education** is predominantly a practical subject and no lessons were observed during the inspection, it is not possible to make a secure judgement about pupils' achievement and the standards they attain. However, several sporting clubs were seen briefly after school, and there is abundant evidence of pupils' successful participation in several competitions against other schools. For example, a girl from Year 6 recently won the local schools' cross country race, and pupils achieved third place in a recent sporting event at Crystal Palace. Pupils also attain good standards in swimming, where almost all are able to swim at least 25 meters, and a significant proportion much further, by the time they leave the school. Pupils speak with great enthusiasm about their sporting activities. The subject is well led by the coordinator who gives freely of his own time in order to ensure that all pupils have valuable sporting opportunities.
92. A specialist **music** teacher, whose subject knowledge and understanding is very good, takes music in the school. This means that pupils have access to good subject knowledge and accurate teaching with high expectation of their skills. Three lessons were seen in which the quality of teaching and learning was good overall. Pupils in Year 3 thoroughly enjoyed keeping a steady beat with higher achieving pupils using instruments well. In a well-structured lesson, Year 5 pupils learned how to think about attack and the uses of voice and keyboard sound to enrich the effect of the music. Again, these pupils enjoyed their learning, organising themselves into groups and working well together. Pupils achieve well throughout the school and standards are above average by the end of Year 6.
93. Most lessons take place in the music room, which is satisfactorily resourced with a range of tuned and untuned percussion instruments. These are used effectively to give pupils good opportunities to develop good instrument playing skills. This has a direct impact on pupils' good achievement. There are well-planned opportunities for curriculum enrichment, which provide further good opportunities to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding. Activities range from live performances and workshop sessions, which are held for pupils throughout the school to individual music tuition. Singing in assembly is sensitive to the occasion and tuneful. The atmosphere in the hall was often reflective and music clearly makes a significant contribution to the spiritual life of the school.
94. Overall, pupils are producing work in **art and design** of a standard above that expected for their age. Displays in the school and profiles of pupils' work include examples of high quality. In a well-taught Year 3 lesson, the pupils developed their skills of observational drawing. They were totally involved in their work, striving hard to produce their very best. Many pupils demonstrated well-honed drawing skills and produced work of good quality. The pupils were clearly enjoying the lesson and were keen to explain how they intended to develop their work further. Some good use is made of sketchbooks, but this is inconsistent across the school.
95. An analysis of pupils' **design and technology** work and discussions with pupils and staff indicate that the standards attained are good overall. The analysis also revealed some high

quality work in resistant materials and graphics. However, opportunities to engage with food and textiles were restricted, indicating the need to review breadth of coverage.

96. Pupils talk enthusiastically about their work. For instance, Year 6 pupils recalled the skills required to make and test balloon-powered buggies. This included the use of saws and glue guns and the evaluation of the finished product through testing. They recall a range of positive experiences such as making of fish in Year 2 and masks in Year 4.
97. The subject co-ordinator recognises that the pressure to perform well in subjects that are tested and reported limits the time spent on design and technology. Consequently, pupils do not experience a programme that effectively addresses the year-on-year acquisition of skills in this subject.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

98. The programme for personal, social and health education is good. In the nursery and reception classes personal, social and emotional development receives much attention. The high quality skills gained by younger children are maintained throughout the school. A published scheme forms the foundation for a well-balanced course for Personal, Social and Health Education and Citizenship throughout the school. Year 6 pupils are well prepared for their new school. A very clear section on drugs awareness is included as well as sex education that places due emphasis on the responsibilities of parenthood and the need to grow emotionally and spiritually.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	4
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	5
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)	2
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	5
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	4
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	6
The governance of the school	5
The leadership of the headteacher	6
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	6

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