

INSPECTION REPORT

ST JAMES' C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL

Westhoughton, Bolton

LEA area: Bolton

Unique reference number: 105209

Headteacher: Mr John Gregory

Lead inspector: Ms Margot D'Arcy

Dates of inspection: 14th – 16th March 2005

Inspection number: 267798

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 controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	420
School address:	Hindley Road Daisy Hill Westhoughton Bolton Lancashire
Postcode:	BL5 2JJ
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Cameron Robertson
Date of previous inspection:	June 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is a larger than average sized primary school. Most pupils are of white British heritage. There are small numbers from a variety of other ethnic groups, but only four are at an early stage of learning to speak English. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is below the national average. The range of pupils' needs includes: dyslexia; moderate learning difficulties; social, emotional and behavioural difficulties; and speech and communication difficulties. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below the national average. The area in which the school is situated is slightly more favourable, socially and economically, than the national average. Children's attainment when they begin school is above that expected for their age. Most pupils remain at the school for their entire primary education. The school has gained a number of awards, including: Investors in People; the Activemark Gold; the Basic Skills Quality Mark; and a Healthy Schools' Award.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

23158	Ms Margot D'Arcy	Lead inspector	Art and design The Foundation Stage Provision for pupils with English as an additional language
9928	Mr Alan Dobson	Lay inspector	
23276	Mrs Margaret Mann	Team inspector	English History Music Religious education
10228	Ms Susan Russam	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Design and technology Special educational needs
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Overall, the school provides a **good** education for its pupils. Most are achieving well or better in English and mathematics, but standards could be higher in science. Teaching is good overall, with a high proportion that is very good. However, there are weaknesses in Year 2 that cause pupils to underachieve. The school is led and managed satisfactorily and provides **satisfactory** value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Junior pupils achieve very well.
- In almost all year groups teaching is good and frequently better, but in Year 2 it is unsatisfactory.
- Reception children get a good start to their education.
- Excellent provision is made to develop pupils' standards and achievement in music.
- Throughout the school, pupils achieve well in religious education (RE) and older juniors achieve very well in physical education (PE).
- Whilst the school is led and managed satisfactorily, there are weaknesses in strategic planning and governance.
- The curriculum is very well enriched by a wide range of additional opportunities.
- Most pupils have very good attitudes to school and behave very well.
- The school promotes pupils' personal development very effectively and pays very good attention to their views.

Improvement since the last inspection has been **satisfactory** overall. Good improvement has occurred in geography allowing junior pupils to achieve the expected standards. Whilst some attention has been given to the recommendation to address weaknesses in the school's improvement plan, the present plan still does not look beyond the current year in sufficient detail. Year 6 pupils' good standards in English and mathematics have been maintained, but there has been some fall in science. Standards by the end of Year 2 have declined. In most other areas of the school, standards and provision have generally been maintained or improved.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Overall, pupils' achievement is **good**. Inspection findings reflect the most recent test results depicted in the table. Standards in English are well above average and very high (in the top five per cent nationally) when compared to similar schools. Junior pupils' above average standards in mathematics also reflect their very good achievement. Achievement in science is currently satisfactory but pupils could do better, as past results show. Reception children make mainly good or better progress in most areas. By the end of their first year in school, most reach the learning goals expected for their age and many exceed these. Reception children's good achievement is built upon effectively in Year 1, but in Year 2 pupils are not challenged enough. Throughout the

school, pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to their abilities. Boys and girls do equally well. The achievement of pupils who are learning to speak English as an additional language is mostly good. Pupils in all year groups achieve particularly good standards in music and RE. Older juniors are also achieving very well in PE and making rapid progress in ICT.

Most pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **very good**, but standards are significantly lower than this in Year 2. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **very good**. Attendance is very good and punctuality good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The overall quality of education is **good**. Teaching is **good** overall, but with significant amounts of very good teaching in all year groups except Year 2. In this year group much of the teaching is unsatisfactory. Support staff make a good contribution to teaching and learning. Pupils with learning difficulties get good help and guidance. The few pupils who are at an early stage of learning to speak English receive good additional help. The school provides a good curriculum that is enhanced by a very good range of additional opportunities and good community links. Whilst resources are satisfactory overall, the accommodation is unsatisfactory. However, this should soon be remedied, as building work is imminent. Good attention is paid to pupils' welfare and safety and there is a good partnership with parents. The school values all pupils and makes very good provision to seek and act upon their views.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall quality of both leadership and management are **satisfactory**. Whilst there are many strengths in the way that the headteacher leads and manages the school, limitations in strategic management have prevented teaching weaknesses from being detected and addressed. Governors meet all of their statutory duties, but rely too heavily on the headteacher. Overall, they do not know enough about the school's strengths and weaknesses and do not challenge the school sufficiently about its performance.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents hold the school in high regard and have no significant concerns. Discussions with pupils and the results from questionnaires completed by them showed that they are also very happy with their school.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Eliminate unsatisfactory teaching and underachievement.
- Improve strategic management through implementing rigorous and tactical checks on teaching and learning so as to identify the most important priorities for improvement.
- Improve governance.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

By the time they reach the end of year 6, pupils have achieved well. Standards in English are well above average and in mathematics they are above. Standards in science are average but could be higher. In all other subjects, most pupils make good or better progress.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Reception children achieve well and most exceed the learning goals expected for their age.
- Year 2 pupils underachieve because of unsatisfactory teaching.
- Junior pupils achieve well overall and make particularly good progress in English and mathematics.
- Although most pupils are achieving satisfactorily in science, they could do better.
- Pupils achieve very well in music and attain standards that are well above those expected.

Commentary

1. Children begin school with standards that are generally above those expected for their age. In response to stimulating learning experiences and teaching that is frequently very good they achieve well. Achievement is especially good in the areas of communication, language and literacy and knowledge and understanding of the world. Here the children make rapid gains and standards by the end of the year are generally well above expectations. Most make satisfactory progress in mathematical development, although higher attainers could be challenged more. By the end of the year, standards in this area are above expectations. The children's personal, social and emotional development is promoted well. Their good achievement in this aspect is reflected in standards that exceed the early learning goals expected by the end of the year, with children showing good maturity, independence and concentration. There was insufficient evidence to make secure judgements about the rate of progress in the areas of physical and creative development. However, children's standards in physical development are above expectations and they are at least in line with what is expected in creative development.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.3 (16.2)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	14.4 (15.3)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	16.1 (16.2)	16.2 (16.3)

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

2. When compared to schools nationally, Year 2 pupils' test results in 2004 were broadly average in reading and mathematics, but below average in writing. When compared to schools in similar contexts, these results were below average in reading and well below in writing and mathematics. Over time, Year 2 pupils' results have not risen at the same rate as those nationally. The indicators of underachievement in the 2004 test data have also been evident in test results in a number of years since 2000. Inspection evidence found that whilst Year 1 pupils are achieving at least satisfactorily, a significant proportion of Year 2 pupils underachieve because of weaknesses in teaching. In 2004, teachers assessed pupils' standards in science as above average, but inspection evidence shows that these pupils (currently Year 3) are not attaining this highly, with standards being broadly in line with what is

expected for their ages. Standards in science for the current Year 2 group are below average, reflecting underachievement. Whilst standards, overall, by the end of Year 2 are broadly as would be expected for pupils' age they should be higher, given their earlier attainment. Standards now are not as good as they were at the time of the last inspection.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	29.3 (29.6)	26.9 (28.6)
mathematics	28.1 (27.9)	27.0 (26.8)
science	28.8 (30.0)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 64 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

3. In 2004, Year 6 pupils' test results were well above the national average in English, above in mathematics and in broadly in line with the national average in science. In English and mathematics, these results reflected a similar picture to those achieved in 2003 and 2002, but showed a considerable fall in science, which continued an earlier, but less significant, fall in 2003. When compared to schools in similar contexts, the 2004 results were very high in English (in the top five per cent nationally) and well above average in mathematics. Over time, results in these two subjects have generally been maintained at this high level and reflect favourably on improvement since the last inspection. However, the decline in science has resulted in the school's overall trend of improvement falling below the national trend.
4. Inspection evidence supports the test results in English and mathematics and finds that junior pupils make very good progress in these subjects in response to very good teaching. In science, pupils are achieving satisfactorily, overall, but could do better with more challenge. In the main, they get a boost in Years 5 and 6, where teaching is of a higher standard, but provision for the development of scientific skills and vocabulary are areas in need of improvement.
5. Throughout the school, pupils from Years 1 to 6 respond exceptionally well to specialist teaching in music. They achieve very well in this subject and attain standards that are well above those expected for their age. There are also strengths in RE where pupils' achievement is good and their standards by the end of Years 2 and 6 exceed the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. In ICT, pupils in Years 1 and 2 make satisfactory progress and reach the expected standards. Junior pupils' ICT skills are developing well. Whilst the standards of the current Year 6 group are as would be expected for their age, they, and pupils in Year 5, are making rapid progress in response to challenging teaching. By the end of Year 2, standards in PE are in line with national expectations. However, there is some underachievement in Year 2. By Year 6, PE standards are above expectations. Lessons seen in Years 5 and 6 showed that pupils achieve well as a result of challenging teaching. In geography, pupils in all year groups make satisfactory progress and reach the expected standards. This represents an improvement since the last inspection. In art and design, design and technology and history there was insufficient evidence to make secure judgements about standards and achievement.
6. Throughout the school and across the curriculum, pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their prior attainment. This is because teachers and skilled support staff provide them with good quality help and work that is well matched to their needs.
7. Test data and inspection evidence showed no significant differences between boys' and girls' standards and achievement. Data and inspection evidence also show that the few pupils who speak English as an additional language generally do as well as others.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Attendance levels at the school are very good and pupils' punctuality is good. Pupils have a very positive attitude to learning and their behaviour, overall, is very good. Their personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most pupils are very enthusiastic learners and very well behaved, but in Year 2, standards are not as good as they should be.
- Pupils' personal qualities are promoted very well, resulting in mature and well-rounded children by the end of Year 6.
- Attendance figures are well above those normally found in primary schools.

Commentary

8. Throughout the school, most pupils are very keen to learn, try hard and behave very well. As such, the majority of lessons run smoothly and learning develops very well. A very different situation is evident in Year 2, however, where many are often insufficiently engaged in learning and inappropriate behaviour is commonplace. This results from weaknesses in teaching.
9. Movement around the school is orderly and pupils are very well behaved in the dining room and in assemblies. Playgrounds have a friendly atmosphere and no signs of bullying or oppressive behaviour were seen during the inspection. Pupils reported that bullying and name-calling are not issues in the school and express complete confidence in the staff's ability to speedily sort out any problems. In the last year, there has been one, temporary exclusion.

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	330	1	0
White – Irish	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	5	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	7	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	3	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	1	0	0
Black or Black British – African	1	0	0
Chinese	4	0	0

No ethnic group recorded	2	0	0
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The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

- The school is very successful in developing pupils' personal qualities so that they become more mature as they get older. When they transfer to their secondary schools, most are very well rounded individuals. A strong emphasis on Christian values permeates the school and adds much to pupils' personal development. Pupils are frequently reminded of the importance of values such as honesty, care, tolerance and respect for others. Prayers are seen as an essential part of the school day and pupils participate very willingly in these. Assemblies play a key part in promoting standards in this area giving pupils a deeper insight into human behaviour, for instance, by focusing on qualities, such as courage, bravery, forgiveness and wisdom. There are very good opportunities in the curriculum for pupils to understand their own and others' cultures.
- Very good relationships exist throughout the school, with pupils getting on very well with each other and staff. Many enjoy helping in the running of the school and there is a good range of opportunities for older pupils to take on extra responsibilities. These include, the 'Buddy' system, where older pupils befriend and help younger ones. The school council is very successful in introducing pupils to ideas about democracy and lobbying. Music has a high profile in the school and pupils' very good appreciation of the subject adds to their spiritual development. The large size of the choir, particularly the high number of boys involved, is a measure of pupils' enthusiasm.

Attendance

- Parents value education and consequently ensure that their children regularly attend school and get there on time. The school has good procedures for ensuring that parents understand the implications of taking holidays in term time.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	3.7	School data	0.2
National data	5.4	National data	0.5

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 its pupils with a good quality of education.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Assessment is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In most year groups teaching is good or better, but there are weaknesses in Year 2.
- There are many strengths in the teaching of reception children.
- Overall, English and mathematics are taught well.
- There is good teaching of pupils with special educational needs.
- Excellent teaching of music results in high standards for all pupils.
- Assessment systems are satisfactory, but there are inconsistencies in how effectively the information is used.

Commentary

13. The table below shows the quality of teaching seen throughout the school during the inspection. Whilst there were strengths in many year groups, all of the unsatisfactory teaching was in Year 2, including in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. This amounted to 38 per cent of the teaching seen in Key Stage 1¹. In Year 1, the teaching was good. Unsatisfactory teaching was principally related to pupils being given insufficiently challenging work and lessons progressing at too slow a pace. In response, pupils often became bored in lessons and misbehaved. Management of this behaviour was frequently ineffective. The impact of these weaknesses is that pupils are not building sufficiently on earlier learning.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 56 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
3 (5%)	14 (25%)	18 (32%)	16 (29%)	5 (9%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

14. In all other year groups, teaching was rarely less than good and frequently better. In the reception classes, teachers' high expectations allowed children's learning to progress at a very good rate. Almost all of the teaching here was good or better, with 43 per cent being very good or excellent. Reception teachers have a very good awareness of how young children learn. They plan lots of practical tasks for the children that constantly reinforce basic skills and help them to make meaningful links between learning in different areas. Support staff are involved very well in planning, teaching and assessment and make a very effective contribution to teaching and learning.
15. Overall, English and mathematics are taught well, with particular strengths in the juniors. For example, in English, over 70 per cent of lessons in Years 3 to 6 were very good and in mathematics 50 per cent were at this high level. The impact is clearly seen in the very good standards achieved by Year 6 pupils in the national tests. Significant features of these highly successful lessons were: challenging content, which pupils relished; and teachers' secure subject knowledge, which resulted in simulating explanations, challenging questions and thought-provoking discussions. Varied methods, including very good opportunities for pupils to work in diversely organised groups, maintained their interest and enthusiasm and supported learning very effectively.
16. Pupils with special educational needs are taught well. Teachers and skilled support staff work effectively together, with the latter being well deployed to help pupils. Their intervention is well planned and promotes pupils' good learning and self-esteem. The minority of pupils learning to speak English as an additional language are given good support in lessons by teachers and other staff. Where necessary, specific work programmes, compiled by local education authority specialists, are followed, with some direct intervention weekly from language specialists.
17. Teaching and learning in music are particular strengths. Specialist teaching for all pupils in Years 1 to 6 has a very significant impact on standards and achievement, which are very good. Other strengths in teaching include very good relationships between adults and pupils. Pupils respect their teachers and rise to their high expectations of behaviour and work quality. In the juniors, some good use is made of homework to reinforce learning. Whilst some marking is useful in helping pupils to see what they do well and how to improve, the overall quality is inconsistent so pupils' understanding of their learning is not as well developed as it

¹ Key Stage 1 includes pupils in Years 1 and 2.

could be. The school has identified a need to involve pupils more often in the evaluation and assessment of their own learning, but this is at an early stage of development.

18. Assessment is satisfactory overall. In most year groups, day-to-day assessments are generally used well to match work to pupils' needs. Particularly good use is made of assessments to inform the provision for pupils with special educational needs and those who may need additional support for learning. Good assessment systems for reception children enable teachers to quickly determine what children can and cannot do when they begin school and are used well to support the planning of work for children of different abilities.
19. The very good procedures noted by the last inspection for assessing English and mathematics have been maintained. However, whilst very effective use is made of the information in the juniors there are some weaknesses in Year 2 where, too often, work is not well matched to pupils' needs, particularly that of higher attainers. Whilst there is a satisfactory range of information about pupils' achievements in English and mathematics, it is inadequate in some non-core subjects². In the juniors, assessment procedures in other subjects are satisfactory, although not all staff implement the systems for science rigorously enough.
20. At a whole school level, some satisfactory use is made of data from tests and assessments to, for example, set annual targets, check performance by gender and organise pupils into teaching groups. However, the data has not been used well enough to check out indicators of underachievement in the infants or to compare the progress of individuals or of different classes within the same year group.

The curriculum

There is a good curriculum, greatly enhanced by opportunities in the arts, sport and other cultural experiences. Resources are satisfactory overall but the accommodation is unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum for most pupils is good, but in Years 1 and 2 there are some weaknesses in how subjects are organised.
- There are strengths in music for all pupils and in PE for older juniors.
- There is very good inclusion of all pupils, with good provision for those with special educational needs.
- A very good range of additional opportunities enriches learning.
- The accommodation is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

21. Overall, the school provides a stimulating curriculum which pupils find interesting and enjoyable. The curriculum for reception children is well founded on the six areas of learning. The theme approach, together with lots of practical work and structured play activities make learning experiences meaningful and relevant. The result is that the children show very good interest in their work and enjoy it immensely.
22. In the juniors, coverage of the curriculum is well planned to ensure sufficient depth and breadth of study in all subjects. However, in Years 1 and 2, some subjects are taught intermittently and the gaps in between do not allow for skills to be reinforced sufficiently. This is particularly noticeable in science. Some basic mathematics skills, such as knowledge of number bonds and multiplication tables are not introduced early enough or reinforced regularly enough.

² Subjects other than English, mathematics and science.

23. There are strengths in the provision for music throughout the school and for PE in the upper juniors. Music has a high profile and is very well planned and taught, resulting in pupils' very good enjoyment of the subject and high standards. Similar strengths were also evident in PE lessons in Years 5 and 6, where pupils' good standards in music supported the sense of rhythm that they showed in dance. A further good feature is the provision that is made for pupils to use ICT skills to support work across the curriculum. For instance, ICT is often used in numeracy and literacy lessons for pupils to record and present work, whilst pupils use the Internet to conduct research in a range of subjects.
24. The school works hard to ensure that all pupils are fully included in what is offered. This raises pupils' awareness of the qualities of their classmates so that they often share equally and collaborate effectively, supporting each other very well. The quality of individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs is good. They are regularly reviewed and evaluated so that new targets can be set. Great care is taken to ensure that pupils with special educational needs have full access to the National Curriculum and that their opportunities to learn are not impeded by their special need. Occasionally pupils need individual help and are withdrawn for short periods during a lesson. However, this is carefully monitored to ensure disruption to learning alongside their classmates is minimised.
25. The school provides a very good range of additional opportunities to enhance pupils' enjoyment of learning. A very large number participate in out of school activities; for instance, well over 100 sing in the two choirs and there are large groups involved in a wide range of sports activities. Many visits take place, providing effective enhancement in subjects, such as history and geography. The school is also active in its involvement in various local initiatives, such as links with the Bolton Arena and 'Performances in the Playground', which involves a number of other local schools. The staff choir and Tai Chi group are effective in providing pupils with good role models for participation in learning.
26. Although there are some good features to the accommodation, the overall quality is unsatisfactory. The school makes every effort to improve the environment, for example, with colourful displays, but the fabric of the building in Years 4 to 6 is poor. Moreover, when pupils have to walk between buildings they are fully exposed to the elements. The hall provides very tight accommodation for a full and active class, although the best efforts of teachers and pupils' enthusiasm generally ensure that learning experiences in PE are productive. Good features of the accommodation include a very good quality adventure playground, including well-marked surfaces on play areas, a large outdoor stage and a good-size field. Resources are satisfactory overall, with good numbers of teachers and support staff.

Care, guidance and support

Pupils are well looked after and receive satisfactory support and guidance in their academic and personal development. The school is very good at listening to and acting on pupils' views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are well cared for in a safe and secure environment.
- The setting of improvement targets for pupils is inconsistent.
- The school council is very effective in influencing school developments.

Commentary

27. The school looks after the pupils well. There is a strong emphasis on caring, based firmly on Christian principles. Supervision is good at all times. Child protection and health and safety matters are treated seriously. First aid cover is good. The school encourages healthy eating and has successfully banned sweets and fizzy drinks. Security around the building is very good. Parents' views that their children are safe and secure at school are well founded.

28. Staff know pupils well and relationships are very good and trusting. Pupils speak very highly of their teachers, explaining that they are very good at listening to and sorting out any concerns. The personal development section in annual progress reports show that teachers know pupils well. Where necessary, these include some useful advice for pupils on how they can improve. However, advice to pupils about how to improve their academic work is not as good. Target setting is inconsistent, with most targets being set for a class rather than for individuals. Where individual targets do exist, pupils do not always remember them.
29. The school treats pupils' views very seriously. There is a well-established school council and pupils' opinions are also sought through an annual questionnaire. Recently, this latter has resulted in some improvements to the playgrounds. The school council, made up of elected representatives from each junior class, is very much involved in the way that the school develops. For instance, it was consulted over a revision to the behaviour policy, made the decision to ban sweets and fizzy drinks and decides which charities to support. There is also an Eco committee, made up of volunteers, which allows pupils to be very effectively involved in the appearance of the school grounds and the way that they are developed.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has good links with parents and the community. Links with other schools are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents have a good opinion of the school.
- Overall, parents are given very good information, but they could be provided with more guidance on how to help their children improve.
- Parents are kept very well informed on what happens in school and their children's progress.
- Pupils benefit from good links with the community.

Commentary

30. Parents have a good opinion of the school. They praised particularly the headteacher, the approachability of the staff and the good standards that pupils achieved.
31. The school keeps parents very well informed. At the beginning of the year parents receive a comprehensive package of very useful information, including: an outline of what their child's class will be taught in each subject; the homework policy, together with guidelines for homework; and guidance on Internet use. Consultation meetings between teachers and parents are very well organised. Meetings are held termly, at times that are usually convenient for working parents, and provide a formal opportunity to review progress. Pupils' reports are well written and generally free from jargon. However, they give very little guidance on how pupils might improve, which is a missed opportunity to involve parents more fully in their children's learning. Regular letters home ensure that parents are kept very well informed about the life of the school.
32. Pupils benefit from the close links that have been established with the local community. For instance, they are very regular visitors to the parish church. Juniors attend a weekly service here and all pupils have opportunities to participate in various events and celebrations. Pupils gain an appreciation of the wider community through, for example, being involved in the 'village in bloom' competition and through developing sporting skills by using facilities at the local football and cricket clubs.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of both leadership and management is satisfactory. Governance is unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher is committed to improving standards, but there are some weaknesses in how this is organised.
- The headteacher has appointed good teachers and instigated effective teamwork, both of which contribute well to pupils' overall good achievement.
- There are strengths in the team approach to co-ordinating subjects, but in some instances co-ordinators have too little opportunity to check on the quality of provision and standards.
- Governors are too reliant on the headteacher and play too slight a part in strategic management.

Commentary

33. The headteacher leads and manages the school satisfactorily. He is a very visible figure and enjoys the confidence of staff, governors, pupils and parents. The very good ethos for learning and promoting pupils' personal development clearly emanates from the headteacher's vision and strong commitment to these areas. He works hard to provide pupils with a stimulating and caring learning environment and expresses a sincere commitment to improving standards. The success of this is seen in the high quality of provision in many areas, resulting in pupils achieving very good personal standards and favourable academic outcomes by the end of Year 6. However, whilst the overall sense of direction for improvement is satisfactory there are some weaknesses in strategic management. For instance, indicators of underachievement in the infants have not been rigorously investigated so there is a lack of clarity about how to raise standards, which the school acknowledges are not high enough. Teaching has been monitored in some subjects, including English and mathematics, but the focus is not sharply defined so weaknesses are not known. As such, the school's improvement plan does not prioritise the most productive lines of development.
34. At the time of the inspection, the deputy headteacher was on secondment to another school. Consequently, it was not possible to make secure judgements about her leadership, although the deputy is involved in making checks on teaching and has overall responsibility for key areas such as the curriculum and assessment. Two teachers have been appointed to act as assistant headteachers during the deputy's secondment. As this was not expected to be for very long, the criteria for appointment was not defined beyond the teachers' seniority and the deputy's responsibilities were not delegated to these staff. As such, it is not possible to judge the impact of their leadership and management at whole school level.
35. The leadership and management of various subjects are co-ordinated by teams. Most co-ordinators are keen and dedicated but weaknesses in the school's overall strategic planning mean that in some instances there are limited opportunities for co-ordinators to effect improvements. This is the case in science where the co-ordinators have not been able to monitor in sufficient depth to define the cause of the fall in standards. Whilst there is good teaching in Year 1, given the high proportion of unsatisfactory teaching in Year 2 the leadership of Key Stage 1 is unsatisfactory, with associated links to the leadership of English, mathematics and science. However, there are strengths in subject management, with some particularly effective teamwork in the juniors that is having a very positive impact on provision, standards, and achievement in Key Stage 2³.
36. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is led well. Supported by the headteacher, a recently appointed co-ordinator has made a very good start to reviewing systems and procedures to ensure that they are consistently understood and implemented throughout the school. Both the co-ordinator and the headteacher have a very good knowledge and understanding of the needs of these pupils and place a high priority on quickly identifying potential problems. Their commitment to providing help to overcome them is a

³ Key Stage 2 includes pupils from Years 3 to 6.

significant strength of the provision. This is illustrated by the efficient deployment of support staff and other resources allocated for this aspect of the school's work.

37. Whilst a number of governors show good commitment to the school, the overall quality of governance is unsatisfactory. The six governors who were present at the pre-arranged meeting with inspectors did not have a clear enough understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Governors' minutes provide minimal evidence of their awareness of underachievement at the end of Year 2. Overall, governors rely too heavily on information from the headteacher and are not involved enough in challenging the school to account for its performance. However, it was clear that the special educational needs governor is well informed and involved and has a good influence on the provision. Governors fulfil all of their statutory obligations.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	941,639.60	Balance from previous year	68,765.73
Total expenditure	948,957.88	Balance carried forward to the next year	61,447.43
Expenditure per pupil	2,112.34		

38. Financial management is satisfactory. The school works hard to ensure that finances are used to best effect for the benefit of pupils and that value for money is achieved in spending decisions. The large surplus that had accrued was being held in reserve to finance building projects. The current surplus is now virtually in line with national recommendations.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children achieve well in response to good teaching.
- Behaviour is very good.
- Very good relationships with staff promote children's enjoyment of school.

Commentary

39. Children are achieving well in this area. By the end of the year standards are above expectations, with most children attaining the expected goals. This reflects the good teaching and high expectations of staff. The children are helped to develop a good sense of right and wrong and, in response, behaviour is very good. Social skills are well developed and continuously promoted so that children learn to take turns and consider others. They have adjusted very well to school routines, for example, attending assemblies with older pupils. The very good relationships engendered by staff help the children to feel secure and promote their enjoyment of school. Skills of independence are continuously encouraged resulting in the children being able to make some choices about their work and conducting simple jobs responsibly.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers' high expectations underpin children's very good achievement.
- Speaking skills are well developed.
- Children show much confidence in reading and writing activities.

Commentary

40. Children achieve very well. By the end of the year standards are well above expectations. Communication skills are very good. Many children talk in complete and sometimes complex sentences, showing a good range of vocabulary. Teachers have high expectations of what children can achieve and plan tasks that really capture their interest. This very good teaching is promoting children's rapid learning of reading and writing skills. As a result, the children have gained a very good knowledge of letter sounds and are developing skills in blending them to read unknown words and write independently. Most easily identify initial and end sounds of words and make very good attempts at identifying middle sounds. They are gaining a good understanding of where full stops and capital letters are used. During the inspection, excellent teaching developed children's understanding of how stories are structured, promoted creative thinking, and reinforced spelling and punctuation skills extremely well. Children have very good attitudes to books and enjoy browsing through them and talking about the story and illustrations. Support staff are used very effectively, for example, in leading group reading sessions.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Counting skills are regularly reinforced.
- Higher attainers are not always challenged enough.
- Practical work and play are used effectively to teach basic mathematical ideas.

Commentary

41. The children achieve satisfactorily. By the end of the year, standards exceed expectations, with most children attaining the expected goals. Counting skills are frequently taught and reinforced throughout each day. Most children count easily to 20 and recognise these numerals. Many can correctly say what is 'one more' or 'one less' than a given number up to this amount. Early addition and subtraction are taught effectively in practical and play situations that help the children to understand these key ideas. This was seen in a session where seven children were helped to find different ways of splitting into two groups, learning, for example, that $3+4=7$ and $2+5=7$. Whilst this work was appropriate for most of the children, some higher attainers could have coped with more challenge. The children develop their understanding of other mathematical ideas such as shape, space and measure in a range of activities, including art work, model construction and working with a programmable floor robot.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very good.
- Children respond with great interest to stimulating activities and resources.

Commentary

42. Children achieve very well and by the end of the year attain standards that are well above those expected for their age. High quality teaching, characterised by teachers' very good subject knowledge and high expectations, underpin children's very good standards and progress. The children show significant interest in the work planned. In a science-based lesson, for example, children were eager to predict which items from a range might be magnetic. As well as providing very good opportunities for the children to test out their ideas, the teacher gave interesting explanations and questioned the children well to extend their understanding of the properties of various materials and how they are used in everyday life. In another lesson, excellent team teaching from the teacher and assistant held children captivated as they learned about the first landing on the moon. There was excellent use of resources. ICT was used very effectively to show the children a movie of the landing and they gained a very good appreciation of the sense of time when comparing pictures of Neil Armstrong then and now. A large model of the spacecraft mesmerized the children, especially as they saw how it came to pieces and noted the relative size of the landing module.
43. Children experience a very good range of activities to promote learning of ICT, design and technology and religious education. Computers and floor robots are frequently in use, with children showing good skills in using these. They make recognisable models from reclaimed materials and construction toys, developing good skills in joining materials. At the time of the inspection, the children were learning about the Easter story and some of the symbols associated with this celebration.

PHYSICAL AND CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

44. It was not possible to make secure judgements about the quality of provision or children's achievement in the above two areas. However, standards in physical development are above expectations and they are at least in line with expectations in creative development.
45. In the one PE lesson seen, the children showed competence in moving in different directions, speeds and levels. They demonstrated a good awareness of space and showed creativity when responding to music. Whilst the teaching was satisfactory, too much was covered in one lesson, which reduced the time available for perfecting skills. The fairly small outdoor area is used regularly and work here makes a sound contribution to the children's physical development, as well as to learning in other areas. In class, the children have appropriate opportunities to gain dexterity through, for example, writing, painting and modelling. No art lessons were seen, but displays show that children have a wide range of experiences and produce good quality two and three-dimensional work. In assemblies, they join in singing activities enthusiastically showing good knowledge of the words, tunes and associated actions. During the inspection, the children showed creativity in pretend play that was linked to the space theme being followed. They really enjoyed dressing up as astronauts and acting out various scenarios.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most pupils achieve well, but in Year 2 there is underachievement and standards are not high enough.
- By the end of Year 6, standards are well above average.
- Teaching is particularly good in the juniors.
- The promotion of language and literacy skills across the curriculum is good.

Commentary

46. Whilst standards at the end of Year 2 are broadly average, inspection evidence shows that pupils are capable of more, particularly higher attainers. Pupils' underachievement is also evident in their test results, which do not compare favourably with similar schools. Since the last inspection, standards have declined. In contrast, the test results of Year 6 pupils have been maintained at a level that is well above the national average, comparing very well with similar schools.
47. Throughout the school, there is good coverage of the curriculum, with pupils gaining a good range of writing experience. Overall, teaching is good, with some very good teaching in the juniors. Whilst teaching in Year 1 is good, there are weaknesses in Year 2. This results from a lack of challenge, a pace of learning that is too slow, and ineffective management of behaviour. Although the introductory sessions for the whole class are generally good, they are sometimes overlong. This results in pupils having insufficient time for written work, which also slows the pace of learning. In most lessons, teachers' secure subject knowledge and high expectations are evident in their planning, questioning and explanations. Most share their objectives for the lessons with pupils, which focuses them and gives them an insight into their own learning. This also helps teachers and pupils to assess progress during the evaluation sessions that occur at the end of lessons.
48. By Year 6, pupils are writing fluently and at length and have very good knowledge of how to alter the style of writing according to the purpose. For example, Year 5 pupils wrote an

alternative type of traditional tale, Year 6 produced a written review of a story and Year 3 wrote instructions for making jelly. Junior pupils are gaining good skills in learning how to plan writing, including different strategies to help them start stories and capture a reader's interest by setting a scene and developing characters. Within writing lessons, teachers pay good attention to spelling, grammar and punctuation. They use ICT well to support their teaching and pupils' literacy skills.

49. By Year 2, most pupils attain the expected standards and know how to use various strategies to read unfamiliar words. However, whilst higher attainers read their books easily and with good understanding and expression, the texts are not always challenging enough. By Year 6, most pupils read a wide range of suitably challenging texts fluently. They have good comprehension skills and are eager to discuss favourite authors. Throughout the school, pupils obviously enjoy reading and there is a good liaison between home and school through the well-kept reading diaries. Well-stocked libraries in each building are in frequent use and support reading skills well. Some good use is also made of ICT-based research tools, particularly in the juniors.
50. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are well developed. The school's recent focus on this aspect is providing good opportunities to develop these skills further. Throughout the curriculum there are opportunities for lively discussions, drama and role-play. For example, infant pupils lead and perform in services at church with great poise, very expressive speaking and, above all, enjoyment. Juniors use mature and relevant language when discussing texts and participate wholeheartedly in choral speaking and poetry readings. Pupils' good listening skills were very evident in several music sessions when they not only listened intently to music being played but also showed respect when listening to each other's evaluations.
51. There are very good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment. For the most part, effective use is made of the information, to support learning, particularly in the juniors. Whilst there has been some good monitoring of classroom practice in speaking and listening, checks in other areas have not been rigorous enough.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

52. The promotion of language and literacy across the curriculum is good. These skills are a key feature in many lessons. Numerous links to promote discussion, reading and writing are well established in many subjects, such as Year 5 pupils' history project on the Greeks and Year 6 pupils' reading of stories and comprehension work linked to their study of the Second World War. Religious education lessons are used effectively, with pupils having many opportunities to write stories, record events and to take part in role-play. Theatrical workshops extend pupils' knowledge and understanding in a variety of subjects, including music, history, geography and dance.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In most year groups pupils achieve well, but in Year 2 they underachieve.
- Very good teaching in the juniors results in above average standards by the end of Year 6.
- Some basic skills, such as multiplication tables, are not taught rigorously or early enough.
- There is good use of assessment to track progress, but weaknesses in marking and individual target setting limits pupils' understanding of their own learning.
- Good use is made of ICT.

Commentary

53. By the end of Year 2, standards are in line with the national average. However, they compare unfavourably with similar schools and reflect underachievement. Inspection evidence found that whilst pupils achieve satisfactorily in Year 1, in Year 2 a significant proportion underachieves. Achievement in the juniors is very good. By the end of Year 6, standards are above average and well above when compared to similar schools. During the inspection, very good teaching was seen in many junior classes.
54. In the best lessons, teachers have high expectations of their pupils and challenge their thinking. Pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour also play a significant part. For instance, Year 6 pupils worked very well with a partner on challenging work on angles, resulting in their knowledge and understanding being significantly enhanced. There is good pace in many lessons, with pupils responding very well to teachers' enthusiasm and encouragement. This was seen in Year 5 where pupils recited the nine and 90 times tables at speed and with confidence. This helped when they moved on to calculating and drawing a range of angles.
55. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, expectations of what pupils are capable of achieving are insufficiently high. Work is not challenging enough and when pupils are given tasks they are not set targets, such as how much they should record in the time allowed. Consequently, too many do not apply themselves well enough, misbehave, and do not achieve the standards of which they are capable.
56. Whilst the overall level of provision is good, some basic skills, such as number bonds and multiplication tables, are not taught early enough. This can be seen in Year 3 where some pupils are still struggling to know the two times table. Whilst some teachers have their own methods and incentives to promote these key elements of mathematics, there is no whole school scheme to ensure that they are taught early and built upon progressively.
57. A feature of many lessons is the good use of ICT. Teachers make effective use of the recently installed interactive screens, which help to grab and sustain pupils' attention, supporting good pace in lessons. Some good ICT linked learning was also seen in Year 6 where lower attainers paid excellent attention to the visual stimulus of a large clock face, which reinforced their understanding of time very well. Other pupils, extending their knowledge of angles, made effective use of a specific mathematics program to estimate the size of different angles. They later controlled the mouse extremely well, using a screen protractor to check the exact measurement of the angles.
58. Pupils take a pride in their work and present it very neatly. Although most are learning well, they are insufficiently informed about what they are good at and how they can improve. Some teachers provide individual target sheets, but there is no consistency in this provision. Pupils' work is marked and teachers write encouraging and complimentary comments but very rarely do they write a note to aid improvement or to provide a further challenge. Some effective use is made of assessment. For example, pupils' attainment is assessed regularly and their progress monitored; forecasts are made as to the level they should attain next. Assessment information is also used effectively to organise junior pupils into ability sets so that pupils are challenged at a suitable level.
59. Management has targeted some useful areas for improvement and overseen the high quality of work in the juniors. However, monitoring of teaching and learning in the infants has not been rigorous enough. Overall, leadership and management are satisfactory, as is the rate of improvement since the last inspection.

Mathematics across the curriculum

60. Some good links are made between mathematics and other subjects. For example, in geography, the development of mapping skills is supported by pupils' knowledge and understanding of co-ordinates. Good use is made of ICT, for instance, for pupils to produce graphs and tables. A good example was seen in Year 5 where pupils' recording of their research of various cities included a number of clear graphs to display the information.

SCIENCE

The provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most pupils achieve satisfactorily and attain broadly average standards.
- In Year 2, weaknesses in teaching adversely affect pupils' learning.
- Marking is inconsistent.
- The role of the co-ordinators is not sufficiently well developed.

Commentary

61. Although Year 6 pupils' national test results fell significantly in 2004, over time, performance in science has generally been well above average. Inspection evidence indicates that the work of pupils currently in Year 6 is broadly average. In Year 2, pupils' standards are below average. Progress is satisfactory in all year groups except Year 2. Throughout the school, most pupils make satisfactory progress, but those who are capable of attaining higher than average standards are not progressing as rapidly as they could. This is because the work that they are given is not challenging enough.
62. Although more than half of the lessons seen during the inspection were taught well or better, pupils' work over time shows that teaching is mostly satisfactory. Overall, there is good teaching of knowledge and facts, but the focus on promoting the use of scientific vocabulary is somewhat lacking. The teaching of scientific skills is generally satisfactory. In Year 2, teaching is unsatisfactory. Over time pupils complete too little work and much of what they do lacks challenge. Lessons are not challenging enough and are too long. As a result, pupils do not build on earlier learning and become bored. They often respond by misbehaving and this is not dealt with sufficiently well. This is in stark contrast to other year groups where pupils show very good attitudes to learning and behave very well.
63. Whilst teaching is satisfactory in Years 3 and 4, there is some over reliance on worksheets. Teaching in Years 5 and 6 is of a better standard. Here, expectations of pupils are higher and they are given more opportunities to influence the direction of their learning. Marking in these two year groups gives pupils good indications of how they can improve, but elsewhere this feature is lacking.
64. The curriculum is satisfactory overall, but in Years 1 and 2 science is incorporated as part of a topic and at times is not taught for some time. This adversely dilutes the provision for, and standards in, skill development.
65. The subject has not been a focus for development in recent years. However, the decline in test results has prompted a review. At the time of the inspection the co-ordinators were not aware of the cause of the fall because they had not been given sufficient time to monitor standards or the quality of teaching and learning. In this respect the role of the co-ordinators is unsatisfactory. However, they do have a clear vision of how the subject should be taught and are keen to restore standards to their former high level. Their intentions to secure high quality professional development for staff, monitor performance data and eradicate unsatisfactory teaching are appropriate.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are rising and pupils have achieved well by the time they leave the school.
- Pupils' good behaviour and keenness to learn support their good achievement.
- Not all teachers are confident enough in their own ability to teach the subject.
- In Years 5 and 6, particularly effective use is made of ICT to support learning across the curriculum.

Commentary

66. During the inspection no ICT lessons were being taught in Years 1 and 2. Discussions with pupils, observations of ICT being used in other subjects, pupils' work and teachers' documents indicate that achievement is satisfactory and standards by the end of Year 2 are broadly average. Whilst standards by the end of Year 6 are also broadly average, they are rising rapidly and pupils are achieving well. This is because they are benefiting from good quality teaching by staff whose knowledge of the subject is very good. There is also considerable evidence to show that standards in Year 5 are also rapidly improving because pupils have regular opportunities to use their ICT skills in many other subjects.
67. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 demonstrate great confidence in their use of computers. They are keen to try out new programs and to improve their competence in the use of familiar ones. Their very positive attitudes and behaviour support successful learning. Pupils work together very co-operatively in pairs and small groups, discussing and resolving problems. Their knowledge and use of correct technical vocabulary is good. They eagerly take advantage of additional learning opportunities to utilise the facilities in the computer suite before school and at lunchtime.
68. During the inspection, the quality of teaching seen was satisfactory. However, in preparation for building work, facilities in the infant building were not available for use. Consequently, the organisation of teaching and learning was not typical, with pupils only being able to access computers in small groups rather than as a whole class. As a number of activities were occurring simultaneously, teachers were not able to devote sufficient time to provide direct teaching of ICT skills, so support staff were being used more than usual in this capacity. However, whilst these staff provided pupils with knowledgeable help, too often they resorted to doing the work for pupils because they had not given sufficient guidance on their role. In a few classes, there was also evidence of work being too controlled by teachers who still lacked confidence in their own ability to teach the subject.
69. The co-ordinator provides good leadership and is an effective role model for staff and pupils. He has a very good knowledge of the subject and has shared this very successfully with several colleagues. He has a good insight into the strengths and weaknesses of the subject and is aware of where further improvements are needed.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

70. The use of ICT across the curriculum is good. In Years 5 and 6 it is very good. Most teachers routinely use computers in classrooms to further pupils' ICT skills whilst extending their knowledge and understanding of other subjects. Where it is most effective, teachers have clear references in their plans as to how they will utilise ICT during lessons. In the junior building, lessons using the ICT facilities are regularly linked to learning in other subjects. Here pupils' confidence and skills enable them to readily access search engines, make use of methods to store and present data and design web sites, as well as using basic word processing skills to present written work.

HUMANITIES

71. Geography and religious education were inspected in full; history was sampled.

Geography

The provision for geography is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good use of fieldwork to provide pupils with meaningful learning experiences.
- Resources are used effectively to support learning.

Commentary

72. The school has taken effective action since the last inspection and made good improvement. Pupils are achieving satisfactorily and standards are now in line with those expected. Although only two lessons were seen, evidence from pupils' work and discussion with some Year 6 pupils shows that some good learning is taking place. Pupils discuss sensibly the reasons for settlements and the interrelationship between people and their environment. They talk enthusiastically about a visit to Grasmere and make appropriate comparisons with their home area. In Year 2, pupils visit the seaside to aid observations and comparisons with their locality. Their study of an island helps them to appreciate both physical and human features.
73. Good use is made of resources for investigation and the development of skills so that, for example, pupils become competent in using atlases and globes. Work in Year 5 shows that pupils researched a range of cities throughout the world and presented their findings through writing and in charts and tables. Year 4 pupils' study of a Kenyan village is also well researched and makes a good contribution to their cultural development. Displays of work in these year groups are enhanced by some very good artwork, contributing to skills in literacy and ICT through research and writing tasks.
74. Some particularly good teaching and learning was seen in Year 5. Here pupils were able to link skills in collecting and recording evidence about places with knowledge of current affairs. They made good use of note taking skills whilst watching a television programme about a range of news items, which enabled them to grasp key information quickly. The teacher prepared them well for this task, moderating the work to the range of ability in the class. The teacher skilfully drew out what pupils knew about the Holocaust and how Comic Relief benefits those in need in the Third World. Pupils later reinforced their world knowledge by using maps and atlases to classify cities, countries and continents and carried out further research into news items via the Internet.

Religious education (RE)

The provision for religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a good curriculum.
- Teachers' good subject knowledge supports learning well.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to the subject.
- The subject makes an effective contribution to pupils' language and literacy skills and their personal development.

Commentary

75. By the end of Years 2 and 6 pupils attain standards that are above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are developing a good understanding of the stories, festivals and places of worship of Christians, Muslims and Hindus. They show good recall of special festivals such as Christmas, Easter, Eid and Divali. Their knowledge of Bible stories is very good. Frequent visits to the local church add good support for pupils' understanding of Christianity.
76. During Years 3 to 6 the curriculum widens to include the worship and practices of the Jewish religion. Pupils continue to have a good and growing appreciation of the differences and similarities of beliefs and practices of the religions that they study. For example, led by the vicar, Year 6 pupils enacted a christening in the local church, taking on the roles of parents, godparents and congregation. They did this with great reverence and maturity, learning the symbols of the ceremony and, afterwards, comparing these with the birth rites of Hindus and Muslims.
77. Teaching is good. Teachers' secure subject knowledge is clearly evident in the way that they encourage full discussions so that pupils readily express their feelings and views. Lessons are well thought through and planned to capture pupils' interest. Pupils behave and attend very well showing respect for each other's views. In discussion, they said that they really enjoyed learning about people's different beliefs. They record their work well. Discussions and recording tasks make a good contribution to the development of pupils' language and literacy skills.
78. A good range of artefacts and books gives effective support for learning. The subject makes an effective contribution to pupils' personal development. The very close liaison with the local church, including regular visits from the vicar, supports learning. Representatives from other religions visit occasionally and pupils have visited their places of worship. The subject has a high profile in school, with assemblies and stimulating displays enhancing the provision.
79. In **history**, no judgements are made about provision, standards and achievement. However, pupils' work indicates good coverage of the curriculum. In Years 1 and 2 pupils enjoy learning about past events and can appreciate the differences between how people lived 'then' and 'now'. This was particularly evident when pupils talked about life in Victorian times. Their learning was enhanced by a visitor who led a workshop on this period and by pupils taking part in a Victorian day where they dressed accordingly. Pupils also talked knowledgeably about the Great Fire of London and Samuel Pepys. Junior pupils' books show good recording and coverage of work on invaders and settlers, the Tudors, ancient Greeks, and life in the 1930s and 1940s. Pupils are keen to find out facts and discover evidence and vividly remember visits to historical sites, such as Norton Priory and museums. These provide good support for learning.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

80. Music and physical education were inspected in full; art and design and design and technology were sampled.

Music

The provision in music is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Excellent specialist teaching throughout the school.
- Pupils achieve very well and reach standards that are well above expectations.
- Pupils are given very good opportunities to perform for others and share their talents.

Commentary

81. A very knowledgeable, skilled and enthusiastic musician teaches all children from Year 1 to Year 6 each week. His very high expectations and effective teaching methods make learning fun and exciting and result in pupils making very good progress and reaching standards that are well above those expected for their ages. Other specialist staff visit to teach strings and woodwind.
82. In addition to class lessons, pupils enjoy separate singing sessions and choir practices. The range of songs pupils learn to sing is extremely wide, as is the music they listen to and discuss. For example, Year 1 pupils showed delight when listening to a piece depicting brass instruments; Year 4 discussed their likes and dislikes of a piece by Benjamin Britten; and Year 6 listened enthralled to a classical guitarist. All pupils sing and perform confidently, showing a very well developed sense of rhythm and a good understanding of pitch. From the earliest stages pupils use correct music terminology. Listening skills in lessons are excellent.
83. In all lessons, pupils are given opportunities to compose and appraise music. For example, Year 6 used tuned percussion to create a blues composition, which was enhanced by a piano accompaniment. Pupils have a very good knowledge of chord sequences. Whilst some improvise on the xylophones, others play chime bars effectively, knowing exactly when to play.
84. The large junior school choir meets before school each week and consists of almost equal numbers of boys and girls. Teaching is excellent. The excited anticipation on pupils' faces is a joy to see as they enter the music room. The teacher demands high standards of behaviour and presentation. All pupils respond very positively and so really enjoy making music. Music is an integral part of assemblies. A specific piece of music or instrument is focused on each week as pupils enter and leave and in some literacy lessons music is played to stimulate pupils' writing.
85. Throughout the year, there are ample opportunities for pupils to perform within their school and the wider community, including for church services and concerts, for senior citizens and in festivals with other schools. Their performances show superb confidence and dedication. The school is truly alive with the 'sound of music'.

Physical education (PE)

The provision for PE is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good teaching in Years 5 and 6 results in standards that are well above expectations.
- Whilst standards are in line with expectations by the end of Year 2, some pupils underachieve.
- A good range of extra-curricular opportunities enhances the provision, but the size of the hall limits learning.

Commentary

86. Standards are broadly in line with expectations by the end of Year 2. However, teaching and learning in this year group are sometimes unsatisfactory because pupils are insufficiently challenged and poorly managed. In the juniors, it was only possible to see work in Years 5 and 6. Here there was very good teaching, with pupils making very good gains in response. The result is that by Year 6, standards are above expectations. In swimming, over 95 per cent of pupils leave school being able to swim the expected 25 metres. Many swim well beyond this and a number represent swimming clubs in the area.
87. An impressive dance lesson in Year 6 was characterised by the teacher's very good subject knowledge and high expectations of pupils. This allowed them to demonstrate their good skills and achieve further. All pupils displayed excellent attitudes to the subject and were well

motivated by their teacher, with whom they have a fine rapport. From the outset, pupils responded very well to the music showing a good sense of rhythm. They used the limited hall space sensibly and safely. A particular feature was how well the pupils worked together in mixed-gender pairs.

88. In other lessons, Year 5 pupils' maturity was evident in the way that they observed and commented on their classmates' gymnastic performances. They applauded, and made comments that were polite, but well directed. Another Year 5 class showed how carefully and sensibly they handle apparatus, co-operating very well. In both lessons the attitude and behaviour seen was a credit to the extremely capable teachers.
89. The school offers a wide range of additional activities after school as well as in inter-school competitions. Teachers volunteer additional time for these, including residential visits. Visitors provide specialist coaching in various sports, such as tag rugby and tennis. Throughout the school there is a positive attitude to the subject. Teachers and pupils dress suitably and very smartly. The size of the hall restricts some activities and teachers have to ensure that pupils are particularly aware of safe practice. Good efforts are made to make use of the outdoor accommodation.
90. In **art and design** and **design and technology** judgements about provision, standards and achievement are not made. No lessons were seen in either subject, but evidence from other sources shows that teachers plan appropriate activities to promote the development of skills, knowledge and understanding. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 produce pleasing artwork, including observational drawings, printing, pattern work and collage with textiles. Year 6 work included very detailed watercolours in which pupils had been able to successfully depict the idea of reflection. Year 3 pupils' colourful pattern work in the style of Gustav Klimt was well displayed. Three-dimensional work, such as mask making and sculpture with different media is well represented. In design and technology, pupils in Years 1 and 2 use different methods of joining materials to construct models of homes and develop sewing skills when making puppets. Displays in the junior building suggest both a satisfactory range and standard of work. Pupils have made containers in the form of treasure boxes, structures with levers and linkages, as well as moving toys that incorporate control mechanisms. Overall, the evidence indicates that satisfactory improvement has been made to provision for design and technology since the last inspection and more time is now allocated to the subject.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

91. Provision in **personal, social and health education** was sampled. Weekly lessons are planned, using a commercial scheme. Understanding the difference between rights and responsibilities is well covered in class discussions. Visitors such as the school nurse, road safety officer and community police provide additional support. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have formed a healthy eating team and an Eco committee.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

The overall effectiveness of the school	3
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	4

Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	5
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4

The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	5
The leadership of the headteacher	4
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	4

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

poor (6); very poor (7).