

INSPECTION REPORT

ST JAMES PRIMARY SCHOOL

Brownhills, Walsall

LEA area: Walsall

Unique reference number: 131581

Headteacher: Mr Martin Atkins

Lead inspector: Mrs Julie Moore

Dates of inspection: 17th – 19th January 2005

Inspection number: 267799

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: Community
Age range of pupils: 4 – 11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 223

School address: Great Charles Street
Brownhills
Walsall
West Midlands

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Telephone number: (01543) 452 328

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Reverend Colin Thomas

Date of previous inspection: 10 / 02 / 2003

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St James Primary School is an average sized school, which is situated in Brownhills near Walsall in the West Midlands. The school is the result of an amalgamation between Ogle Hay Infant and Junior schools in 1999. Most pupils live locally and the area has a mixture of privately owned and rented accommodation. Most pupils are from White English backgrounds and the very few pupils who have minority ethnic backgrounds speak fluent English. There is a higher than average percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and the percentage of pupils with special educational needs is above average. The percentage of pupils with statements of special educational need is broadly average. Pupils' special needs are mostly moderate learning difficulties, but a very small minority have speech and physical difficulties. When the children join the reception class the majority of them have skills and understanding that are well below those expected for their age.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
8710	Julie Moore	Lead inspector	Science Geography Physical education
10965	Pat Edwards	Lay inspector	
18346	Rod Bristow	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Design and technology
16892	Julia Elsley	Team inspector	Areas of learning in the Foundation Stage Art and design Music
28686	Elizabeth Walker	Team inspector	English History Religious education Special educational needs

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

St James primary is a school that is improving rapidly since the appointment of the headteacher one year ago. It provides a **good** education for its pupils and there are no longer the serious weaknesses that were identified at the last inspection. The headteacher provides excellent leadership, teamwork is very good and pupils' achievement is good. Teaching is good and standards are improving significantly. The school is on course to achieve its challenging targets. It provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The outstanding leadership of the headteacher, alongside the very good subject leadership, governance and management, is driving the school forward at a very brisk pace.
- Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are above average.
- Standards in English, mathematics and science are not high enough but significant improvements in teaching and learning are starting to boost achievement.
- There are very good systems for assessing how well pupils are doing and staff make the best use of this information to plan work that is challenging and exciting.
- There are limitations to the curriculum for the reception children.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Attendance and punctuality levels are too low.

There has been a very good improvement since the last inspection when there were many issues to be tackled. Excellent improvements to the quality of teaching means that the unsatisfactory teaching has been eradicated. Everyone connected with the school is determined that the school will continue to move forward at a very good pace.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

The table above shows that low standards in the national tests for seven and eleven-year-olds have been the norm for a number of years. This situation is improving. In 2004, a greater proportion of pupils attained higher levels than they did in 2003 except in the reading tests for seven-year-olds. Since then, progress has been rapid and the current Year 6 are attaining significantly higher standards in the main subjects. Achievement is **good** for the higher, average and lower attaining pupils in Years 1 to 6. When compared to similar

schools standards are low. They were in the lowest five per cent in the country in science. Standards in ICT are good. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well, like their classmates. Children in the reception class join the school with well below average skills and understanding. They achieve well and a small minority are on course to reach their targets¹. The rest of the class are not at this level but they are making acceptable progress.

Attendance levels are below national averages and too many parents find it difficult to get their children to school on time. Pupils' behaviour is good and they have positive attitudes to school. Their personal development is good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **satisfactory**.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is **good**. Teaching and learning are **good** in the main subjects of English, mathematics and science. They are very good in ICT. Pupils with special educational needs are well taught. Across the school, lessons are challenging and teachers expect their pupils to work hard, which they do. Very good use is made of assessment to challenge and extend pupils. Marking is good, giving pupils clear pointers about how to improve their work or identifying what needs to be done to achieve their targets. Teaching is satisfactory for children in the Foundation Stage² but the curriculum is not enriched sufficiently. In Years 1 to 6 the curriculum is good as are the resources for learning. The accommodation is very good. Pupils are well cared for and there are good links with parents, the local community and very good links with other schools.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **very good** and the leadership of the headteacher is excellent. Governance is very good and the entire school team is focused on improving standards, achievement, teaching and learning so that St James school is on course to be one of the best. A good start has been made towards achieving this goal as the school is one of the ten most improved schools in the local area. Previous barriers to learning, such as weak teaching and a weak curriculum have been overcome very successfully and the school's future is bright.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have good views of the school, which they feel is doing a good job of educating their children. Pupils are happy to come to school and they enjoy learning.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards and boost achievement in the main subjects of English, mathematics and science.
- Improve attendance and punctuality.
- Expand the curriculum in the reception class to provide more opportunities for children to develop their imagination and extend their creativity.

¹ These are called the Early Learning Goals.

² The name given to nursery and reception classes.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement is good and this is because pupils are well taught. Current standards are below average for the seven-year-olds and the eleven-year-olds.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good for pupils of all abilities including those with special educational needs.
- Current standards are below average in English and science.
- Current standards are broadly average in mathematics.
- Standards are above average in information and communication technology (ICT).

Commentary

1. Pupils' achievement is good in Years 1 to 6, a significant improvement since the previous inspection when both progress and achievement were erratic. Teaching is much stronger than it was, a new headteacher is in place, staff have undergone intensive training, and the school has been guided very well by its local support team. All of which has had a positive impact on pupils' progress and achievement.
2. National test results have remained stubbornly low in recent times, being well below average in English, mathematics and science for the eleven-year-olds. When compared to similar schools, standards were in the lowest five per cent in the country in science and well below average in English and mathematics. However, the improvements between 2003 and 2004 were insufficient to move overall standards upwards. Reading was the weakest area, especially for the seven-year-olds, and the school took immediate steps to tackle this with good success. Reading standards have improved and are below average. The new scheme, alongside strongly focused teaching, is boosting standards across the board.
3. Girls have been achieving higher standards than boys, especially in Years 1 and 2. This situation is ironed out by the time pupils reach Year 6 where inspectors found very little difference overall.

The tables below show the school's results: -

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	13.7 (14.2)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	12.9 (12.4)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	14.9 (14.2)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 23 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.0 (23.0)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	25.0 (22.5)	27.0 (26.8)
science	24.9 (24.5)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 43 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

4. There is some way to go before standards approach national averages but the school has set challenging targets for improvement in 2005. It is predicted that 76 per cent of Year 6 pupils will achieve Level 4 in English and mathematics, (Level 4 is the expectation for Year 6 pupils) and 26 per cent will achieve Level 5, the higher level. The school is well on course to achieve these targets. Very good systems for assessing how well the pupils are progressing, alongside excellent analysis of all the data about pupils' performance, means that weaknesses are speedily identified and tackled. The school is very quick to respond to issues, as it has demonstrated by the way it tackled the reading problem in Years 1 and 2. Governors are well aware of the current position and they monitor the situation very closely, asking critical questions about the achievement of all the pupils.
5. Pupils' current and previous work shows that they are developing a good body of knowledge and understanding. For example, pupils use a range of strategies to identify unknown words in their reading. They understand how authors develop their characters and their plots, and the higher attaining pupils know how to use language for different purposes in their written work. Average and lower attaining pupils need help to do this. In mathematics, pupils have an increasing competency with the four rules of number, successfully working out problems in various ways. Year 6 pupils have a good understanding about how to set up a science investigation so that it is fair.
6. Children in the Foundation Stage³ achieve satisfactorily overall. They achieve well in their personal, social and emotional development and in their physical development. When children join the reception class, their skills and understanding are well below average. They make satisfactory progress and a minority are on course to achieve their targets by the end of the reception year in all areas of learning. The others are achieving satisfactorily but this is not enough to reach the targets expected for their age by the end of the year.
7. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well, like their classmates. Their individual education plans are well structured, making their targets relevant and meaningful. There are good systems in place to challenge the higher attaining pupils, who also achieve well in lessons and over longer periods of time. Pupils' attitudes are very positive. They behave very well and respond with enthusiasm to the teaching assistants with whom they have a good rapport.
8. One of the school's main successes is ICT, where standards in Year 6 are above average and pupils' achievement is very good. Standards in religious education are broadly average. The other subjects were only sampled in this inspection and there is insufficient evidence to fully evaluate standards.

³ The name given to nursery and reception classes.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes to school are good and generally they behave well. The provision for pupils' personal development is good. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall. Pupils' attendance and punctuality is unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' attitudes to their learning are good.
- Pupils' respond well to the schools efforts to encourage good behaviour.
- The majority of pupils have good relationships with other members of the school community.
- Pupils' knowledge of cultures other than their own is limited.
- Pupils learn to respect others and act responsibly.
- Pupils' attendance is below the national average and a significant number arrive late for school.

Commentary

9. Pupils' attitudes to school are positive as they were during the last inspection. The pupils like being part of the school community. Pupils' behaviour in and out of lessons is good overall although four pupils were excluded in the last reporting year. This was appropriate. Staff have very high expectations for pupils' conduct and effectively employ the agreed behaviour strategies. The majority of parents and pupils agree that reported incidents of bullying are dealt with appropriately by staff. The good levels of personal development displayed by the majority of pupils are due in good part to the provision made by the school. Pupils enjoy responsibilities such as being house captains and serving on the school council. Attendance is unsatisfactory and below the national average. Absence is carefully monitored. Registers are called at the beginning of each session and any absence is followed up on the first day. The education welfare officer works closely with the school and attendance support workers have just begun a project supporting parents who find difficulty in getting their children to school on time.
10. Pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. Pupils are valued as individuals by all adults and their ideas are appreciated. Daily acts of collective worship are of a broadly Christian nature and are used appropriately to affirm the shared values of the school.
11. The provision for pupils' moral development is good. The consistent emphasis on respect for others and on taking responsibility for one's actions helps pupils establish for themselves what is right and wrong. All adults in the school provide good role models. Pupils learn by example that it is important to value each other and the environment.
12. The provision for pupils' social development is good and all pupils are well supported. The pupils are encouraged to form constructive relationships and to work together collaboratively. They are expected to look after their own property and to treat the property of others with respect. All classes have a range of monitors responsible for tasks which they carry out to the best of their ability.
13. The provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. They develop an appropriate understanding of local culture through visits to places of interest such as

Aston Hall and the War Museum at Cannock. Visitors to the school such as theatre groups and storytellers enhance pupils' cultural understanding. Religious education plays a part in increasing pupils' awareness of non-Christian beliefs and traditions. However, a significant element of their cultural education is underdeveloped. The great variety of traditions in literature, music and art that characterises the multicultural nature of the wider society are not fully explored and celebrated.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.1	School data	0.1
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.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Chinese

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
218	4	0
3	0	0
1	0	0
1	0	0

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is good.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The quality and use of assessment is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very good use of individual and group targets guides planning and boosts achievement.
- Teamwork is strong and effective training has improved the quality of teaching across the board.
- Teaching is very good in ICT.
- Assessment is used very well to track pupils' progress and achievement, to identify weaknesses and to identify trends in learning.
- Pupils work productively. They are keen to learn because they are well taught.
- Pupils' interest slowed in a very few lessons because tasks were not challenging enough or there were not enough opportunities for them to find things out for themselves.

Commentary

14. Teaching has improved significantly since the previous inspection when there was a proportion of unsatisfactory teaching. There has been a very good improvement all round. The quality of teaching and learning is now good, with some very good features, especially in ICT.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 40 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1(3%)	9 (22%)	17 (43%)	13 (32%)	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.

15. Teachers are secure in their knowledge of the subjects, especially the main subjects of English, mathematics and ICT. This enables them to challenge pupils, as in a Year 4 ICT lesson when pupils worked on branching databases. The teacher's good subject knowledge, not only in ICT but in literacy and numeracy as well, enabled pupils to engage in in-depth discussions about animal behaviour. Speaking and listening skills were developed well as pupils shared ideas and findings with their classmates. Numeracy skills, which pupils used effectively to interpret mathematical data, were also applied successfully in this lesson. Very good systems for tracking how well the pupils are doing enable staff to identify strengths and weaknesses so that gaps are speedily identified and tackled.
16. Lessons are well planned, and the very good use of targets enables tasks to be pitched at the right level of challenge for the pupils. Marking is good, and pupils have a very clear idea about what they have to do improve their work and to achieve their targets. Staff do their best to ensure that pupils' learning is meaningful, and they are successful. Learning moves forward at a good pace. Just occasionally, satisfactory lessons lacked pace for a short time and when this happened, pupils' learning slowed

because they lost interest. This occurred in a religious education lesson where a group of pupils needed extra help and their learning slowed because the teacher and teaching assistant were working with another group.

17. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory, with some good features. Teamwork is good, as are relationships, and this helps children's learning to be productive. One strength is in the provision for children's personal, social and emotional development and this gives them a good start to their school life. No opportunities are missed to develop children's independence through well-established routines. Children's physical development is also good and they achieve well. Learning is satisfactory overall because across the Foundation Stage curriculum, the children have too few opportunities to develop their skills independently and creatively, and this limits their progress.
18. Throughout the school higher, average and lower attaining pupils learn successfully, as do those pupils with special educational needs and those with gifts or talents. Their achievement is good, like their classmates. Teaching assistants provide good support that enables lower attaining pupils to achieve well and move forward in their learning.
19. Teachers and teaching assistants work closely with pupils with special educational needs, and well-focused targets enable pupils to make good progress towards achieving their learning goals. Pupils are enthusiastic and contribute with alacrity to the discussions. They work hard on the appropriate tasks; enjoying their success and responding very well to the innovative and interesting phonic approach. They have all made good progress since the programme was introduced and are developing a good understanding of the different groups of sounds. Individual education plans are detailed and used well to measure pupils' progress. The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) is well organised and regularly reviews the progress pupils make, taking appropriate action where this is necessary. The school receives good support from other agencies and makes good use of their expertise.
20. Homework supports learning in class effectively and parents are pleased about this. The school is working hard to involve more parents in supporting their children's learning, both at home and at school, with some success.

The curriculum

The curriculum **is good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- ICT is used very effectively to promote interest and enthusiasm for teaching and learning.
- The curriculum, especially English and mathematics, is planned very well and good use is made of time throughout the school day.
- Support staff are used exceptionally well to enhance all pupils' learning, especially those with special educational needs.
- The accommodation and resources are very good and used effectively to promote a variety of teaching styles.
- Pupils have very good opportunities to take part in a wide range of activities during and at the end of the school day.
- There are limitations to the creative and imaginative curricula for pupils in the reception class.

Commentary

21. The curriculum is planned very effectively, especially in English where all pupils benefit from an innovative and effective programme to promote their literacy and phonic skills. This is a good improvement since the previous inspection. Teaching assistants are clearly directed and have established a number of very good practices to ensure that pupils benefit from learning in small groups and continually use the skills they have learnt in all areas of the curriculum.
22. ICT is used constantly to promote pupils' learning and is a powerful tool for the pupils to develop their writing skills and to respond to complex pieces of text as a basis for discussion. The consistent use of ICT enables lessons to maintain a momentum and the pupils respond enthusiastically and confidently to the wide variety of methods teachers use to promote both literacy and numeracy skills.
23. The well-planned curriculum exploits the very good range of resources in all areas of learning. It is embedded within the National Curriculum and there is careful thought given to making links between the subjects so pupils can make use of their literacy and numeracy skills. The tasks pupils do are relevant for them. They can see both the connections and relevance in the work they are asked to do. Teachers plan their work very carefully encouraging pupils to extend their own ideas and provide many opportunities to extend and use language in the form of discussion. Religious education is taught according to the locally agreed syllabus. Children in the Foundation Stage have too few opportunities to explore and develop their creative and imaginative skills. The curriculum is satisfactory but limited and there is a need to obtain a better balance between the outdoor and indoor curricula.
24. Partnerships with local secondary schools are very good. The curriculum is enhanced through accessing the expertise and facilities from the high schools to develop and promote pupils' learning in science and in a range of sporting activities. Pupils in Year 5 and 6 swim at the local secondary school whilst the remainder of the pupils learn to swim in the school's swimming pool. Staffs from local schools regularly meet in groups and work hard to improve both their own skills and those of their pupils in different areas of the curriculum. A very good range of activities are provided at the end of the school day so that pupils can take part in music and arts festivals. They can use the homework club to seek assistance where difficulties arise and can take part in a wide range of different sports for both boys and girls.
25. Pupils with special educational needs contribute well to all curriculum areas; they are fully involved in a wide range of activities. The planning to accommodate their needs in lessons is very good. When they are encouraged to put forward their view, they respond with interest, offering their ideas clearly and using words carefully to support their ideas. Teachers work hard to extend pupils' language skills but the lack of key vocabulary, particularly in science, limits the progress they make in this area.

Care, guidance and support

The school provides a caring environment where teachers know their pupils well providing them with good guidance and support.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers know their pupils well and are supportive and caring of them.
- Parents are happy with the school's induction programme and it works well.
- The school council is effective in enabling staff to obtain pupils' views and involve them in making decisions.

Commentary

26. The school has maintained a caring and supportive environment as reported at the time of the previous inspection. Teachers know their pupils well and value them as individuals. Pupils' personal development is informally but closely monitored through discussion. The school has consulted with parents through questionnaires and gains pupils' views through the school council. Child protection procedures are well understood by staff and training for child protection and first aid are up to date. The school has an appropriate health and safety policy. School governors carry out regular risk assessments and all necessary safety checks are up to date.
27. In reply to the questionnaire, the majority of parents say they are happy with the school's induction arrangements. These allow children to settle quickly and feel secure in their new surroundings. The pupils have good and trusting relationships with adults working in the school and are happy to talk to them about any worries or concerns.
28. Pupils are provided with good support and regular reviews of their progress are integral to the provision that is provided. The school goes to considerable lengths to ensure there are sufficient opportunities to extend their knowledge and understanding, with obvious success.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

As found at the previous inspection, the school has developed useful links with its parents and provides them with good information. The links with other schools are very good and contribute significantly to pupils' learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are supportive of the school and are happy with the information they receive in newsletters.
- Parents are provided with useful information on their children's progress in annual progress reports and at parent-teacher consultation meetings.
- The headteacher and staff are willing to talk to parents at any reasonable time.
- The school has developed very constructive links with other schools.

Commentary

29. The majority of parents think well of the school and feel comfortable about approaching staff with any questions or concerns. The headteacher makes himself available to parents at the beginning and end of each day. The information provided for parents in regular newsletters and at termly parent-teacher consultation meetings is good. Pupils' annual progress reports are detailed and give specific information on how pupils might improve. The majority of parents and pupils are satisfied with the amount of homework given and workshops have been held for parents on numeracy, which help them better support their children at home. Parents are provided with curriculum information each term and curriculum evenings have been held for parents. Staff appreciate the regular help given by a number of reliable parents who assist with reading, on trips and in class. The *Helping Hands* parents group assist with fundraising and social events that help provide resources to enrich pupils learning.

30. The partnerships with the nursery school and several nearby secondary schools are very good. Curriculum development and staff training and support for mathematics, science and physical education enhance pupils' learning well. Links with the local community contribute successfully to pupils learning, for example through visits to the parish church and local home for the elderly.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has a determined vision for improvement.
- Key staff and governors provide very good direction for the school.
- Teamwork is a strength of the school.
- There are excellent systems for ensuring that teachers perform effectively and that pupils achieve very well.
- The leadership and management of subjects is very good.
- Governors challenge and support the work of the school very well and ensure very good financial management matches priorities.

Commentary

31. There has been a very good improvement in leadership and management since the previous inspection. The headteacher is a dedicated and inspirational leader, committed to providing the best for the pupils of St James Primary School. Under his dynamic leadership, teamwork has become a key factor in driving improvement. This teamwork has removed the wide range of serious weaknesses identified during the last inspection. Teaching, non-teaching staff and governors share a determined vision for building on becoming one of the ten best improving schools in Walsall during 2004. The deputy headteacher and subject and phase leaders have become more actively involved in raising standards and assisting in the analysis of strengths and areas for development. Teaching assistants play an increasingly important role when matching teaching and learning to the needs of individuals and groups regardless of age, ability or gender.
32. The co-ordinator for pupils with special educational needs is well organised and she makes a significant contribution to the support pupils receive. She engages well with parents and other agencies to ensure the pupils receive high quality support. The learning support assistants are very well directed. They contribute significantly to the management of these pupils through the clear direction, high quality resources and materials which are available to them. The strong teamwork between all staff throughout the school impacts very well on the pupils' confidence and the progress they make.
33. Governors fully support the school's work and make a major contribution to the leadership of the school. They share high expectations and play a greatly improved role in monitoring and evaluating decisions. Governors fulfil their statutory duties efficiently. They visit classrooms, oversee provision in literacy, numeracy and special

educational needs and receive reports from, and hold discussions with, subject leaders before sharing their findings with colleagues. Consequently, there is a very good understanding of the strengths, or otherwise, of St James' Primary School. Governors ensure that pupils benefit from the decisions made and they are very well prepared to contribute to planning for the future.

34. Existing good systems have become more rigorous. Performance management has been increasingly successful in motivating teaching staff. Subjects are monitored systematically and pupil performance has been analysed. A particular strength is the way in which data is used accurately to target improvements for groups and individuals. Pupils are becoming increasingly more involved in evaluating their own successes. Curriculum leaders create exciting and challenging experiences for pupils, and are pro-active in monitoring standards and the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects, ensuring that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with gifts and talents, achieve equally well.
35. Day-to-day administration is capably managed by the school secretaries, freeing the headteacher to concentrate on driving the school forwards. Day-to-day financial management has become more effective since governors initiated a full audit. Governors are now better informed when managing finances. Prudent financial planning and careful budget monitoring ensure that the school is able to meet its commitment to funding the actions planned. Principles of best value are given a high priority, with a very good monitoring of spending decisions in order to ensure that pupils benefit. Greater efficiency has resulted in the school now providing a good value for money.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	692,706
Total expenditure	714,651
Expenditure per pupil	2,850

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	22,444
Balance carried forward to the next year	499

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The overall provision for the 30 children in the reception class is satisfactory. The provision for personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development is good. The overall curriculum is satisfactory because there are too few opportunities for the children to develop their imagination and creativity. The quality of the teaching and learning has been maintained at a similar level to that reported at the last inspection and the Foundation Stage is soundly managed.

The children's attainment on entry to school is well below that expected when compared to the national assessment guidelines. There is only one intake for each academic year and all the children start school in September. In the current cohort, all the children have had pre-school nursery experience but a significantly high proportion of the children will not be five until the summer term.

Most of the children are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals in their personal, social and emotional development and in their physical skills by the end of the reception year. A few children will achieve the expected levels in communication, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development. However, the rest of the class are not at this level but are making acceptable progress in line with their capabilities.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children have a good start to school life.
- The children make good progress and achieve well.

Commentary

36. Most of the children are on course to reach the Early Learning Goals and this is because the staff take every opportunity to develop this area of learning through well-established and planned routines. Teaching is good. Routines provide a good structure within which the children are able to learn to co-operate and play together well, becoming increasingly independent in their personal and social skills. Adults teach the children to accept responsibility for their own actions and consequently, the children have developed an awareness of, and a sensitivity to, the needs and feelings of others. They are learning to share equipment well and establish good relationships with their peers and adults. Their behaviour is good and they show respect for those around them. Both boys and girls change for physical education lessons in the hall quietly and efficiently but many still need help and guidance. They persevere well, and, although it is a slow process, they are making good progress in the task. Personal hygiene is managed well. The staff show a very caring and sensitive

approach to all the children's needs, including those with special educational needs, and they have good relationships with parents.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

The provision in communication, language and literacy is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children's listening skills are good.
- The staff systematically introduce the children to letter names and initial sounds in their teaching of early reading skills well.
- The children have insufficient opportunities to develop and use their literacy skills independently because the introductory sessions to lessons are too long.

Commentary

37. Although the children communicate well with each other and with adults their spoken English when they first start school is poor. They are making satisfactory gains in their language skills but it is not sufficient for them to attain the levels expected for their age. Teaching is satisfactory, but adults are not always sufficiently involved in play activities that foster talk between children. A greater focus has yet to be given on discreetly correcting grammatical errors and the pronunciation of words and extending the children's responses. The children have the ability to listen well and they make good progress in following instructions.
38. Most of the children, including those children with special educational needs, are making steady gains in their reading and writing but they could achieve more. Stories are a source of pleasure. The children enjoy listening to stories and the enthusiasm for storytelling by the adults promotes new vocabulary and captivates their interest. However, the introductory part of the literacy lessons are too long and the children become restless with inactivity. In many cases the opportunities to accelerate the children's learning are lost because there is insufficient time for the children to complete or explore a range of different activities during the practical part of the lesson.
39. Good attention is given to early reading skills. Books are shared with adults daily and also taken home. The children know that the picture conveys meaning and that we read from left to right. The few higher attaining children can point to a few individual words confidently and competently with the support of an adult. In writing, there is a good emphasis on forming letters correctly but as yet they are not consistent in shape or size. The few more able children are beginning to create letter strings and write simple words but in general, there is a lack of creative stimuli to support their learning. Copying text restricts the children's creativity and flow of thought. The staff use rhymes and song to successfully develop the children's understanding of initial sounds. Evidence from the workbooks shows that the children are not having sufficient

opportunities to independently use and apply these emerging skills and knowledge of sound and letters in recording. There are some opportunities provided for the children to write independently in the role-play area. On one occasion the children wrote out appointments at the doctors surgery. However, the classroom writing area lacks an imaginative and creative approach to foster independent writing and self-initiated tasks.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

THE PROVISION FOR THE CHILDREN'S MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT IS SATISFACTORY.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good use is made of resources to support mathematical development.
- The introductory sessions are too long.

Commentary

40. The children make steady and consistent gains in their mathematical understanding and are achieving well. Despite this, many of them will fail to reach the targets for their age by the end of the reception year. Teaching is satisfactory. However, occasionally the children spend too much time sitting on the carpet and this limits the time they have to work independently. When this happens learning slows. The children concentrate well when they are engaged in practical tasks and this aids their learning effectively. Children with special educational needs are well supported by staff. The teacher's planning for mathematical development, and the use of resources, demonstrates a good range of practical tasks to promote enquiry, exploration and discovery. The outdoor classroom is underused and this limits the children's mathematical experiences.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

The provision in knowledge and understanding is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The children use computers and construction equipment well.
- Good use is made of the outdoor learning environment to support scientific understanding.

Commentary

41. The children have good opportunities to use the computer. They use the mouse, follow instructions on the screen and are beginning to confidently 'click and drag' and select shapes to place on top of one another. The significant feature is that although most have difficulty in controlling the mouse, the levels of concentration are high and they persevere until they have achieved some degree of success. Adult interaction is the key to supporting pupils progress and enhancing their achievement. Teaching is good. The children use the large and small construction apparatus well, they share equipment and respect each other's contributions. As part of an ongoing topic on the

senses, the children were looking at sounds in the environment and there were good opportunities to challenge and promote the children's enquiry, exploration and discovery skills and engage them in talk to a higher level as they walked about the school and outdoors.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

The provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The children are confident in physical skills and they achieve well.
- The teacher's planning and opportunities provided for both indoor and outdoor physical development is good.
- The outdoor accommodation does not provide for all-weather access.

Commentary

42. The children are confident in their use of tools such as scissors, pencils and crayons and for example, in threading small beads. Achievement is good. Children are making good progress towards their targets and a high proportion of the children are likely to achieve them by the end of the reception year. When the children are suitably focused, the teaching and learning are good, because the levels of adult interaction challenge the children's thinking skills well. In the hall the children are capable of utilising the space competently and have a good awareness of the need for safety. Activities are tightly structured and the children follow instruction well. During the outdoor activities, the children move around the playground freely without knocking into each other. Enthusiastically and skillfully, they manoeuvre tricycles, bats and balls whilst engaged in independent play. The next stage is to expand the time and use of the outdoor area so that the children gain the benefits of working in the fresh air across all areas of the curriculum. At present, the lack of a covered area limits the provision in this area.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children's artistic development is restricted.
- Good use is made of songs to support other areas of the curriculum.
- The children have suitable opportunities for role-play activities.

Commentary

43. Children have too few opportunities to work creatively and independently. Their achievement is satisfactory. Role-play areas are used regularly as a free-choice activity. In one session, adult involvement stimulated the learning at the doctor's by asking thought-provoking and challenging questions. This gave a sense of purpose and direction to the play, and teaching was satisfactory. However, the resources and the arrangement of the role-play areas lack imagination.

44. Music plays an important role in the reception class, and the children have good experiences in singing. Teaching is satisfactory. The use of songs to support other work, for example in literacy and mathematics, is good. There is a good emphasis on the use of nursery rhymes and simple songs to support language and literacy development. Children can, for example, sing the number sequences confidently and clearly enjoy the experience. A small proportion of children are on course to achieve the expected targets for the age but the others are not at this level and will fail to achieve them. Teachers' planning does not indicate how the outdoor classrooms could be used to extend the children's creativity.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school's focus on raising standards through the use of a well-structured phonics programme is impacting on pupils' reading and spelling skills.
- There is very good use of ICT to improve the pace of lessons and pupils' writing skills.
- The marking of pupils' work is very good and demonstrates how pupils can improve the quality of their writing.
- Teachers use assessment well to measure progress and plan future lessons.
- Reading and writing skills are used well across other areas of the curriculum.

Commentary

45. Standards in English are much better than those reported at the previous inspection. By the age of seven, overall standards are below average and by the time pupils are aged eleven they are still below average. Standards are slowly beginning to rise. Girls perform significantly better than boys in the national tests at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6. The school is taking steps to address this concern and providing more suitable resources to engage the boys' interest. Boys' progress is tracked carefully. The school's detailed assessments indicate that the gap is closing and results have been targeted to rise significantly in 2005. The school's targets are ambitious but achievable. Teaching is much stronger than it was, which is the main reason that standards are pushing upwards. The school has focused carefully on recording pupils' progress and is using very good systems for checking out their progress and achievement. Lessons are carefully planned to ensure that pupils are on course to achieve both their personal and group targets and this boosts standards successfully.
46. Standards in speaking and listening are satisfactory in Year 2 and good in Year 6. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are developed well through the very good use of teachers' questioning techniques and their ability to promote the use of effective discussion. Pupils listen carefully to each other and contribute to the discussion thoughtfully, adding their reasons in sentences. Pupils achieve well and make good progress because lessons are planned very well, taking into account the various needs of all pupils. Pupils are responsive to the variety of approaches. They engage well in the dialogue about different sounds, the meaning of words and the spelling patterns which emerge during the innovative and well-structured approach to the teaching of literacy. This is successfully based on a whole-school approach linked to letter sounds. The programme is interesting and well structured, encouraging pupils to want to learn.
47. It is a similar picture in reading; the new scheme has boosted reading standards in Year 2. Pupils read from a variety of good books, both from a scheme and from the well-ordered and pleasant library. They take reading books home but diaries are not always completed so reading progress for some pupils is limited. In Year 6, pupils are developing effective reading skills, the self selecting books and maintaining their reading diaries correctly to review and discuss the books they have read. Pupils are

taught in ability groups and those with special educational needs are very well supported. They make good progress because of the high quality support they receive from the teaching assistants.

48. Pupils' written work in Year 2 is satisfactory; they are developing a cursive handwriting style, which is well formed and are beginning to produce stories and poems using different styles and ideas. In Year 6, writing is good; pupils use paragraphs well, have some understanding of complex sentences and punctuate their work accurately.
49. In a Year 6 lesson pupils use word-processing and other writing skills to demonstrate a complex storyline and develop ideas about different characters. Their work is presented with a degree of pride and their handwriting styles are usually good.
50. Teaching is good. Pupils' work is marked very well throughout the school and provides older pupils with very clear guidance on how to improve the quality of their writing by measuring progress against individual targets. Overall, pupils receive good guidance and they are encouraged constantly to use their spelling and handwriting skills across all areas of the curriculum.
51. Teachers use technology very well to demonstrate various techniques and ideas. Lessons are conducted at a good pace and consequently pupils are engaged and work hard to achieve their learning objectives. Pupils' behaviour in lessons is very good. They enjoy and achieve well because they are constantly busy and use ICT to process and edit text quickly so they can assess which style or sequence is relevant to their task. Teaching is at least good and often very good. Lessons are well planned and good resources are used effectively.
52. The leadership and management are good. The subject leader has responded well to the necessity of raising standards in reading and writing. The well-constructed action plan has enabled all staff to avail themselves of the innovative and imaginative scheme to promote literacy throughout the school. His enthusiasm for the use of ICT and purchase of good resources has impacted well. He recognises the necessity for constant and thorough assessment and has evolved good systems to make this manageable.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

53. There are good opportunities to use language and literacy across all areas of the curriculum. Teachers' planning is very good and reflects the use of these skills. In science, opportunities are restricted by the lack of a scientific vocabulary and pupils are reluctant to record their results of their investigations. Pupils' note-taking skills are developing and the use of word-processing programs is good.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are close to expectations by the age of seven, and are broadly average by the age of eleven.
- Achievement is good for all pupils regardless of age or ability.
- The quality of teaching is good overall and very good at the end of each key stage.

- Pupils enjoy mathematics and have good attitudes to learning.
- The leadership and management of mathematics are very good.
- Very good assessment procedures are in place.
- The use of assessment to target improvement is impressive.
- ICT is used effectively to support learning.

Commentary

54. Inspection evidence shows standards to be just below average by the age of seven and broadly average by the age of eleven. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection when standards were judged to be well below average across the board. Indications are that standards will be even more favourable when compared with similar schools. An analysis of previous work indicates that challenging targets have been set for all ages and ability levels, and that all pupils have achieved well, regardless of age or ability, in order to reverse the previous trend of consistently low standards. The very good systems for assessing pupils' knowledge and understanding are now used impressively to target improvement.
55. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are being taught well how to apply their improving mental skills in order to solve problems. They explore place value, patterns and sequences to well above 100. At least one pupil in four is achieving at the higher Level 3, which is an improvement since 2004. They have a good understanding about shapes and measures, and interpret graphs which illustrate their surveys of likes and dislikes. Pupils in Year 6 use the four number operations well, with average and above average pupils calculating to two places of decimals. There is a secure understanding of shapes and measurement, with pupils using simple formulae to calculate areas and perimeters of regular shapes. The use of a wider range of representing data graphically is less well evident in pupils' previous work. Pupils have a sound grasp of fractions and percentages. Most parents have contributed to an improvement in mental accuracy by encouraging their children to learn table facts. There is an increasing level of pupils performing at the higher Level 5, with at least one in four being challenged to choose from the wide range of strategies taught. Of particular note is the insistence that pupils explain how they have solved their problems. This strategy has improved understanding as well as improving pupils' speaking and listening skills.
56. Teaching and learning are good overall, an improvement since the last inspection, with some very good teaching at the end of each key stage. Well-qualified teaching assistants are managed effectively. They are fully involved at the planning and evaluative stages, and contribute impressively to the improvement in the quality of teaching and learning. They consistently prompt and reinforce the skills being taught, at a level which is appropriate for their focus groups, particularly those with special educational needs. Planning is good, challenging each ability group. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and both teachers and pupils use interactive whiteboard technology effectively, adding a new and exciting medium to teaching and learning. Pupils enjoy mathematics and share the enthusiasm of their teachers. The quality of learning benefits from very good behaviour and pupils eager to complete their tasks.
57. Subject leadership and management are very good and have played a notable part in speeding up improvements. Performance is analysed and areas for development are identified. This information is then used most effectively to target improvement for

individuals or groups. Priorities such as problem-solving and mental accuracy are being addressed effectively by a dedicated and committed team. Marking is good and pupils are made aware of their successes and then challenged to improve. There are constructive links with the mathematics governor, and priorities and successes are discussed openly. This ensures that the governing body is fully aware of the subject strengths and areas for development. Parents are informed about changes in style and content, with workshops being well attended.

58. There are excellent links with local secondary schools. Resources are shared in order to motivate pupils and prepare them very well for the next stage of learning. Teachers assist in boosting performance, and one-to-one discussions between pupils from both stages of learning help to increase understanding. The investment of ICT is used effectively to learn table facts, represent and interpret data, and adds an extra dimension to learning.

Mathematics across the curriculum

59. The use of mathematical skills to support learning in other areas of the curriculum is good. Charts, tables and graphs are used effectively to record investigations in science. The understanding of scales improves mapping skills in geography, and timelines foster an understanding of chronology in history.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is full and varied and pupils have a good range of science investigations.
- Standards are below average for both the seven and eleven-year-olds.
- Achievement is good and improving throughout the school. Achievement is very good in Year 6.
- The subject leadership is very good.

Commentary

60. Recent national test results remain consistently low for both the seven and the eleven-year-olds. What these results mask are the significant improvements in teaching, learning, standards and achievement that have taken place since the summer term in 2004. The subject is moving forward very well, strengths and weaknesses are identified and analysed, and appropriate action is taken to boost standards and achievement across the board. There are very good improvements since the previous inspection.
61. No lessons were observed in Years 1 and 2 as none were taught during the inspection. Scrutiny of pupils' past and current work indicates that targets are in place and these guide planning. Tasks are pitched at the right levels, science is well planned and assessed at regular intervals. Each area is covered in depth and pupils are making good progress in their knowledge and understanding, as well as in their ability to tackle science investigations, for example, when Year 2 pupils were testing the

properties of different materials. However, pupils' weak literacy skills limit their progress.

62. All of this holds good in Years 3 to 6 where teaching was good. Teachers use the interactive whiteboard to good effect, enabling them to refer back to previous investigations and successfully extending pupils' previous learning. The strong emphasis on science investigations means that pupils are well used to organising themselves, planning their tasks, collecting their equipment and recording their findings. Mathematical skills are used and applied well, as in a Year 4 lesson where pupils were investigating if there is any connection between the length of a person's legs and the distance they can jump. Recording remains an issue, but less so than in Years 1 and 2, because of pupils limited literacy skills.

63. St James school has worked very closely with its local secondary school, which is a designated Science College. There have been many benefits for St James in terms of improved access to training, resources, teaching and learning. The subject leadership is strong. Standards, achievement, teaching and learning are monitored and evaluated and the subject is moving forward. The next stage is to improve the use of ICT to support learning in science.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Skill development for pupils by the age of seven is satisfactory.
- Skill development for pupils by the age of eleven is good.
- The subject is well led and staff have good subject knowledge.
- Achievement in ICT is at least good.
- Pupils' attitudes are very good.
- Governors evaluate their investment in a very good range of resources.
- ICT is used to increasingly well to support learning in other subjects.

Commentary

64. The provision for ICT has improved appreciably since the last inspection when it was judged to be satisfactory. The quality of teaching ensures that by the age of eleven, pupils apply their skills effectively.

65. Achievement is consistently good, irrespective of gender or ability. Pupils with special educational needs make as much progress as others. The quality of teaching and learning has benefited significantly from the decision to focus a teaching assistant when pupils are in the computer suite. Governors have monitored the investment in resources and the concentration on the development of teachers' professional skills.

66. Teaching is very good and has many strengths. Overall, teachers have very good subject knowledge and the pace of learning is very good. Introductions are brief, allowing the maximum time for pupils to apply their skills and understanding. Relationships are very good and pupils collaborate well with their computer partners. Pupils thoroughly enjoy their experiences and respond enthusiastically to the levels of challenge and the opportunities to make decisions and share opinions.

67. Teachers promote the use of computer technology in other subject areas with interactive whiteboards adding a new dimension to teaching and learning. Pupils are highly motivated. Younger pupils use '*Simple Graphs*' to illustrate information gathered from surveying likes and dislikes; older pupils research information about the Beatles in history and landscapes in geography.
68. Pupils in Year 2, demonstrated their control of line and colour (*Colour Magic*) when emulating the style of the artist 'Mondrian', and pupils in Year 3 devised questions which led them to sort by using 'branching' techniques. Pupils in Year 6 benefit from the overall acquisition of skills when making PowerPoint presentations, inserting text; using digital cameras and the Internet to add images; and using hyperlinks to add to the quality of their project. Pupils save their contributions independently.
69. The leadership and management skills of the subject leader are very good. She has high expectations and has been inspirational in raising overall subject knowledge and driving improvements. Her action plan, shared with the link governor, includes an extension of national guidelines to match the curriculum more closely to the needs of the school.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

70. COMPUTERS ARE UTILISED VERY WELL TO SUPPORT LEARNING IN OTHER SUBJECTS, BOTH IN THE COMPUTER SUITE AND IN THE CLASSROOM. INTERACTIVE WHITEBOARDS ARE INCREASINGLY MORE EFFECTIVELY USED TO PROVIDE AN EXCITING NEW DIMENSION TO TEACHING AND LEARNING FOR TEACHERS AND PUPILS. ALL PUPILS HAVE E-MAIL ADDRESSES, AND OLDER PUPILS INCREASINGLY USE THE INTERNET TO DEVELOP MORE ADVANCED RESEARCH SKILLS. SURVEYS ARE RECORDED GRAPHICALLY AND *WORD TEXT* IS USED WIDELY TO ENABLE PUPILS TO SHARE THEIR WRITING WITH DIFFERENT AUDIENCES.

HUMANITIES

Religious Education

Provision in religious education (RE) is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is well planned.
- Teaching in Y6 is good.
- Teachers use discussion very well to develop pupils' thinking about different beliefs.

Commentary

71. Pupils in Year 6 achieve standards that are in line with those expected in the locally agreed syllabus. The curriculum is suitably planned, giving pupils a clear understanding about the beliefs and key features of Christianity, Judaism, Islam and Sikhism by the end of Year 6.
72. Teaching is good and lessons are planned very well. Teachers use the high-quality resources with assurance. The pupils listen carefully, contributing their ideas

sensitively and are enthusiastic in their response. They offer good ideas and reflect well on different points of view. In all lessons pupils are constantly challenged by the teacher to think and reflect about their own ideas. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils were very confident about their knowledge of God as a divine being for Jews and Christians. The skilful use of questioning and well-planned tasks enabled pupils to recognise that God is the ultimate being for Muslims and were able to make succinct comparisons between Christianity and Islam.

73. The school uses the local church very effectively and older pupils are confident in describing it as a place of worship and some of the key features within it. Year 1 pupils were interested in the building; they had been well prepared for their visit and used their own experiences to describe weddings and baptisms. The very good use of digital photographs to record their visit enabled pupils to use the evidence and refresh their ideas about the key features of the church and reflect on the information they had been given.
74. The subject leader is confident about her subject and has a clear understanding about how the subject should develop throughout the school. She has devised her own action plan to meet the demands of the recently revised syllabus and has provided a good range of resources to support learning about other faiths. Her leadership and management are very good and she supports her colleagues well. Pupils higher up the school use the Internet to research information and ICT as a tool to word-process their own ideas. Visits to other places of worship are not planned but visitors from other faiths have been included in RE lessons.

Geography and history

75. These subjects were sampled during this inspection. No lessons were observed as geography is not taught at this time in the school year, so there is insufficient evidence to make a judgement about teaching, standards or achievement. Younger pupils are secure in their understanding of maps as they track the travels of Barnaby Bear. Older pupils use their literacy skills effectively as they identify the location of various newspaper reports. Systems for assessing pupils' progress and achievement are securely in place, and these guide teachers' planning successfully. The subject is being led by the headteacher on a temporary basis.
76. In history, the school makes good use of local resources to extend pupils' historical skills and knowledge, ensuring that pupils have a good awareness of the past. Pupils are very aware about major historical events by the time they are in Year 6 and they sequence events well. They demonstrate how to make comparisons between different times in the last century and show considerable interest in the lifestyles and music of the 1960s. Pupils in Year 4 recognise how limited and difficult life was during the Second World War. The school has used the local war museum well, so that pupils empathise and have direct experience of clothing and lifestyles during the war. Resources are good; the well-used authentic Victorian kitchen in Year 1 enables these pupils to develop interesting role-play situations and make good comparisons with their own homes. Their speaking and listening skills are developed well through incidental play opportunities in this area. The curriculum is based on national guidelines and is well managed so that pupils develop secure concepts and acquire some knowledge of the past.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

77. These subjects were sampled in this inspection. Few lessons were seen so it is not possible to make a judgement about the quality of teaching or the provision. Discussions were held, and planning and assessment files and records were scrutinised alongside pupils' current and past work to ensure that the curriculum meets requirements.

Art and design

78. The leadership and management of art and design are effective. There is a clear approach to raising standards and the achievements of the pupils. A new scheme has been introduced recently and staff are receiving the appropriate training to implement the full coverage of the National Curriculum. ICT is making a significant contribution to the art and design curriculum as seen in the one lesson observed. However, the curriculum is not sufficiently embedded in the day-to-day work of the school and this limits pupils' creativity.

Design and technology

79. As no lessons were observed, it is not possible to make a judgment on provision. The subject leader's planning file indicates a satisfactory coverage, using national guidelines during the summer term. Examples of pupils' work include making moving pictures in Year 2 and investigating cams in Year 6.

Music

80. Pupils have a sound range of musical experiences. They regularly sing and play instruments in lessons as well as in extra-curricular activities. In the lessons seen, younger pupils were able to keep a steady beat with their un-pitched instruments. Older pupils in Years 3 and 4 achieved well in their lesson as they listened, recognised and played a range of musical phrases using their voices as well as their instruments. The subject is managed well and the subject leader has a good grasp of the priorities that are in place to move the subject forward.

Physical education

81. There is a full curriculum for physical education, which is enhanced by the provision of swimming for all age groups. The school has its own small pool, which is used regularly by the younger pupils. Older pupils swim at the nearby secondary school. The very good range of extra-curricular activities enhance the school's provision for physical education very well. Very few lessons were observed, but in these, there were too few opportunities for pupils to evaluate the quality of their skills and improve them. Without this experience, it is difficult for pupils to know what they have to do in order to improve the quality of their performance. There has been a satisfactory improvement since the last inspection, especially in assessing how well pupils are progressing. The subject leadership is sound.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

82. This subject was also sampled during the inspection. Personal, social and health education is taught through a series of appropriate topics. The pupils' personal and social education is central to the school's philosophy, which underpins all aspects of its work.

83. The school has a well-developed programme of units of work that are carefully planned and co-ordinated with the topics and themes linked closely to other areas of the curriculum such as art and design, science and religious education. Health and sex education, alongside a programme of drug awareness, ensures that pupils are well aware of the importance of a healthy lifestyle and its impact on their life and work. Pupils respect their peers, having positive attitudes towards points of view other than their own. Good examples occurred when the pupils were discussing issues about the environment, or collaborating in groups of three or more to form a still life composition to sketch.
84. Pupils' views are sought on a range of aspects linked to school life generally. Circle time is valued as an ideal opportunity for pupils to put forward their ideas and suggestions. All of which augers well for life as young adults and future citizens.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	5
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	5
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	4
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	2
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	2
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	1
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

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

poor (6); very poor (7).