

INSPECTION REPORT

ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Bradford

LEA area: Bradford

Unique reference number: 107333

Headteacher: Mrs K Spillane

Lead inspector: Mr J Palk

Dates of inspection: 7th - 9th June 2005

Inspection number: 267808

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary
School category: Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils: 4 - 11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 203
School address: Beacon Rd
Bradford
West Yorkshire
Postcode: BD6 3DQ
Telephone/Fax number: (01274) 679 030
Appropriate authority: The governing body
Name of chair of Bernadette Benyon
governors:
Date of previous 5th July 1999
inspection:

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St John The Evangelist Catholic Primary School is a typical-sized primary school with 203 pupils aged 4-11 taught in single year groups. The school serves families from a range of social circumstances. The majority of pupils are white British with a small minority of pupils of African and Asian background. All pupils are fluent English speakers. There are no pupils learning English as an additional language.

The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is similar to most schools. There are above average numbers of pupils with special educational needs; most of these have moderate or specific learning difficulties. A few have physical needs. Three pupils have a statement of special educational needs.

Few pupils leave and join the school other than at the usual times. Children join the Reception class in September and their attainment overall is typical for their age.

The headteacher was appointed in September 2004 and two other teachers joined the school this year.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
2363 0	J Palk	Lead inspector	The provision for children in the Foundation Stage Science Art and design Design and technology
9928	A Dobson	Lay inspector	
2296 7	M Griffiths	Team inspector	Mathematics History Geography Physical education
2341 2	A Jeffs	Team inspector	The provision for pupils with special educational needs English Information and communication technology Music

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **good** school. Standards are average overall and most pupils are achieving as well as they should. Teaching and learning are good and pupils are well motivated to give their best. The headteacher gives a very clear steer to the school, ensuring it has high expectations of its staff and pupils. The school is improving rapidly in all areas and gives good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The headteacher is very good at taking action that will make the school better and involving all staff in improvement.
- Children make a very good start in Reception.
- Standards in Year 6 are above average in English, mathematics and physical education (PE) but below average in art and design and information and communication technology (ICT).
- Pupils' behaviour is very good and they have very positive attitudes to their work.
- Teachers' lesson planning is good but they do not always make the best use of teaching assistants.
- A very good partnership with other schools enriches the curriculum.

The school has made **satisfactory** progress since the last inspection. Standards are now higher in all subjects, although there is still room for improvement. Teaching is of a better quality; there are higher expectations of pupils in most lessons. The provision for children in the Reception Year and for teaching PE has improved well. Provision for learning ICT skills is better but standards still lag behind expectations. The management of the school is now good. The procedures for evaluating and taking action are very strong features of the leadership and the school is in a very good position to improve further.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Achievement overall is **good**. Recent results show that too many higher attaining pupils were not making adequate progress in subjects between Years 3 and 6. The school is taking effective action to remove the areas of underachievement in writing and mathematics. Pupils in Year 6 have quickly made up the lost ground and are now attaining above average standards in English and mathematics. Standards in science are average but higher attaining pupils could still achieve more. All children make good progress through the Reception class and the majority are on course to exceed what is expected by the time they start in Year 1. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well in reading, writing and

mathematics because the work is well matched to their needs. By end of Year 2, standards are above average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs are making good progress towards their individual targets because of good support. Most reach at least average standards in English, mathematics and science. Pupils do not have enough experience of all aspects of ICT and consequently standards are below average through the school. Standards in art and design in Year 6 are below expectations because teachers lack confidence in teaching this subject.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are **very good**. Pupils value each other and behave very well. Attendance is above average; punctuality is good and all pupils are very keen to get on with their work.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is **good**. Teaching and learning are **good**. Lessons are well planned and teachers make good use of assessment information. Relationships between pupils and teachers are very good and teachers successfully encourage pupils to contribute to lessons. Work is generally well matched to pupils' needs, enabling them to stretch that little bit further in each lesson. When actively involved, teaching assistants offer good support to pupils but there are too many occasions when they are not involved in lessons.

The curriculum overall is good. It is very thoughtfully and imaginatively planned in the Reception class. Recent adjustments to the timetable ensure a good balance of activities in all subjects. There have been good developments across the school in opportunities for writing and in opportunities for pupils' personal development. Pupils are well cared for and fully involved in school life. A very good partnership with a local secondary school enriches the curriculum.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management are **good**. The school is very well led by the headteacher, who inspires her staff to always do better. Other key staff provide good leadership and management. They have a good understanding of developments in their subjects. Pupils' achievements are adequately tracked and teaching monitored very effectively so that the school is good at coming to a view about its strengths and weaknesses. Governance is satisfactory. The governors provide good support but are not so good at coming to a view about overall strategic development and some statutory requirements are not met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have a high opinion of the school. They feel their children are well looked after. Pupils like their school very much. They like their teachers and the responsibilities they are given to make the school even better.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards in ICT and art and design.
- Improve achievements of more able pupils in science.
- Make better use of teaching assistants in lessons.

- To meet statutory requirements of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Achievement is good overall, although it varies in different subjects. There is no marked difference in the performances of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's achievement in the Reception class is good.
- Standards are above average in English, mathematics and physical education (PE).
- More able pupils could reach higher levels in science in Year 6.
- Standards are not as high as they should be in art and design and information and communication technology (ICT).

Commentary

1. Children are achieving well in the Reception class because of very good teaching, an exciting and challenging curriculum, and good accommodation and resources. The adults keep a close track of children's progress and provide well-matched activities. Most children are well above average in their personal development and above average in English, mathematics and their knowledge and understanding of the world when starting Year 1.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.0 (16.7)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	15.5 (15.8)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	17.9 (17.9)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 27 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. The 2004 tests were above average in comparison with all schools and when compared to similar schools. Results have improved steadily year on year with recent good improvement in the proportions reaching higher levels in reading. The underlying improvement is in line with the national trend. Teacher assessments in science are above average. Inspection found that current pupils in Years 1 and 2 have achieved well from being average when they started in Year 1. They are above average in all aspects of English with good proportions reaching higher levels in reading and writing. The best gains have been in writing because teaching is very good. Standards are above average in mathematics because of the continued good teaching of strategies for solving number problems. Pupils make good progress in their science investigative skills and are above average.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.7 (26.8)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	25.9 (26.7)	27.0 (26.8)

science	28.4 (27.0)	28.6 (28.6)
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There were 27 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

3. Pupils' performances in Year 6 2004 tests were above average in English whilst those for mathematics and science were below average. Performances in English tests are better than schools with a similar prior attainment but are well below average in mathematics and below average in science. There has been a downward trend in Year 6 results which is a reflection of poor progress made by more able pupils. Inspection found that standards in mathematics are much higher than recent results, whilst standards in English and science have also risen. The impacts of improvements in teaching writing are bearing fruit. Standards in writing are currently above average and pupils are achieving well. Considerable progress has been made in eradicating the underachievement by higher attainers in mathematics through a focus on mental arithmetic and teaching problem solving skills. Standards in mathematics are above average in Year 6 and this is satisfactory achievement for these pupils who were above average when they started Year 3. Standards are good in mathematics in other year groups and the school has set demanding targets for the next two years which they are well on course to attain. Standards in science are now average in Year 6, and continue to improve as a result of the attention given to practical work. Less able pupils achieve well to reach average standards but more challenge is required to ensure that small minorities of more able pupils reach the levels expected.
4. Pupils are fit and most perform above the expected standards in PE. They experience a very good range of activity in lessons, playtimes and as part of the wider curriculum. There have been some recent good improvements in the planning and resources for ICT but this has not yet worked its way through the school and standards of older pupils are still below expectation. Standards in history, geography, music and design and technology were sampled and are broadly in line with expectations. Art and design work in Years 1 and 2 was not inspected. Pupils' knowledge and skills in art and design are below those expected in Years 3 to 6. There is a lack of confidence in how this subject is taught.
5. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in reading and speaking and listening, gaining steadily in confidence as the result of early success and skilled support. These pupils often make very good progress against their individual education plan targets that relate to behaviour, social skills and self-confidence.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good overall. Personal development, including spiritual, moral and social development, is very good. Pupils' cultural development is good overall. Attendance is above the national average for primary schools and punctuality is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Relationships across the school are very good and promote pupils' confidence and self-esteem.
- Pupils are enthusiastic about their learning.
- Pupils enjoy the many responsibilities that they are given.

Commentary

6. The very good emphasis on promoting pupils' personal development continues to be a strength of the school, as it was at the last inspection. This means that pupils are very keen to come to school and their very good relationships with teachers and other staff results in secure and confident children. Teachers and other staff have high expectations of how pupils behave and pupils respond well to this and do not waste time with poor behaviour.
7. The headteacher, along with the deputy headteacher, has been quick to build on the strengths by implementing a personal, social, health and citizenship education programme (PSHCE). This provides all pupils with regular opportunities to think about how they could and should behave in different situations and develop the confidence to stick to the decisions they make.
8. Pupils are interested in their learning, are keen to succeed, and take pride in their work. The school regularly celebrates pupils' successes and they learn to value each other's achievements. Pupils work very well together in lessons and are keen to contribute to discussions. Children in the Reception class have very good working habits; selecting what they will do when not directed and putting away equipment sensibly.
9. Pupils enthusiastically take on responsibilities. The school council¹ and the base meetings,² held once a week, provide very good opportunities for pupils to discuss issues that are important to them. Many opportunities are provided for pupils to have responsibilities in Years 5 and 6 that contribute to the smooth running of the school and the very positive atmosphere of partnership and community.
10. Pupils' spiritual development is encouraged by opportunities for reflection during collective worship, which helps them to develop a very good set of values, principles and beliefs, and their own self-awareness. Adults in school are strong role models and help to give pupils a very good understanding of right and wrong. The multicultural aspects of the school curriculum have improved since the last inspection and are now good. The well-taught lessons about other world faiths and visits by people from different backgrounds encourages pupils to value others. They enjoy exploring a range of cultures through such activities as cookery, poetry and music from other continents.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	3.9	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.

11. Attendance improved this year and has exceeded the school's target because of a rigorous drive to sharpen up procedures. Good attendance is given a high profile and

¹ School council; two representatives from each class meet together regularly to discuss and resolve issues that affect pupils in school.

² Base meetings; pairs of classes join each week for twenty minutes, with their teachers and teaching assistants, to talk through the week's high and low points. They evaluate their progress together and recommend individual pupils for awards.

pupils cherish the termly certificates awarded for full attendance. There have been no exclusions.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a good education. The curriculum is broad and balanced. Good teaching ensures that pupils' achievement is sustained through the school. Pupils are well cared for. There are very good links with the community, other schools and parents.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good. The procedures for, and the use of, assessments are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching in the Reception class is very good.
- Lessons are well planned.
- Good use is made of assessment information in English and mathematics.
- Skilled teaching assistants provide good support for pupils with special educational needs but they are not effectively used at the start of lessons.
- Teachers' subject knowledge in art and design is weak.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 34 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0 (0%)	6 (18%)	21 (62%)	7 (20%)	0 (0%)	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.

12. The activities in the Reception are very well planned around what children need to be learning and are very firmly based on the regular tracking of their progress. Activities are exciting and ensure that children are purposefully engaged and learning well. The classroom and outside areas are thoughtfully organised, encouraging the good development of language and personal development. Teaching assistants work well with the class teacher and help small groups effectively.
13. Teachers' lesson planning is good. It sets out very clear expectations of what is to be learnt during the lesson and what questions will help the teacher to guide the learning. The careful planning ensures that there is always time left at the end of the lesson to gather together to explore pupils' thinking and consolidate what has been learnt. This is a very powerful device for checking up on pupils' progress. Good use is made of these evaluations when planning future lessons. All lessons contained the necessary challenge to move the majority of pupils' learning forwards. Teachers made good use of the collaborative skills of pupils, often setting them tasks that require co-operation. Expectations of independent learning are high and because work is usually well-matched, good progress is made.
14. There is clarity about what the different ability groups are to achieve in English and mathematics lessons that stems from good assessment information and is particularly effective in challenging the more able pupils. Assessment in other subjects gives teachers a guide as to what pupils know and can do but is not precise enough about what pupils have attained and whether this is good enough.

15. Teaching assistants' involvement in lessons is informed and skilled. They have very good relations with pupils and work very well with teachers. The good achievement of pupils with special educational needs is attributable to the skilled and committed work of learning support assistants. However, teachers did not always deploy their assistants as effectively as they might. Thus, in a number of lessons, two or three teaching assistants sat for too long listening to the teacher. In this way, good opportunities for focused observation of pupils were missed. Whilst it is clear what teaching assistants are to be doing during the main part of the lesson to support learning, there is no mechanism for evaluating these pupils' learning.
16. Teachers are very knowledgeable about what is required to teach English, mathematics and PE effectively. This showed through in some excellent questioning that encouraged pupils to think, reason and improve. Where teachers' skills are weaker, as in teaching art and design, there is less effective use of questions. The questions do not penetrate pupils' understanding and the feedback on what is being learnt is not precise. Marking of pupils' work is good. It helps direct pupils to what they need to learn next and where they need to correct work so that they consolidate learning.

The curriculum

Curriculum provision is good. Accommodation is good and resources satisfactory. There are good enrichment opportunities on offer for all pupils.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There has been good improvement in the quality of curriculum provision.
- A very good PSHCE curriculum contributes well to personal development and has a significant impact on pupils' maturity.
- Support for pupils with special educational needs secures good achievement for these pupils.

Commentary

17. The planning of a broad and balanced curriculum is effective and is contributing to higher expectations, good progress and improved teaching and learning. The provision for PE, design and technology and geography have all improved since the last inspection. The headteacher's revision of curriculum organisation into single year groups has succeeded in overcoming the previously identified issue with planning for mixed classes. Time is now used well and there are many opportunities for additional teaching of literacy and mathematics and physical development. In particular, an effective 'basic skills' sessions started most days. These were usually characterised by a sharp focus on English and numeracy activities and provided a good opportunity for teachers and assistants to hear pupils reading in a settled and supportive atmosphere.
18. The programme of visits and the wide range of additional activities enrich the curriculum significantly for all pupils. The school has very good contacts with a range of local clubs, such as the Bradford Bulls, and participates fully in local sports events

and leagues. All of the activities are over-subscribed, but the school ensures that there are equal opportunities for all pupils to attend the clubs of their choice at some point in their school career. Modern foreign languages work now include Spanish and French for older pupils and this is developing well.

19. The school is a very inclusive one, with all pupils being welcomed and their successes celebrated. This caring and respectful environment is enhanced by the attention given to each pupil's physical and social development through a very good personal, social and health and citizenship education (PSHCE) programme. Support for pupils with special educational needs is good throughout the school. It is well managed by the co-ordinator, good plans are developed and teaching assistants provide skilled teaching and strong personal support for pupils who often lack confidence and self-esteem.
20. Accommodation and resources are generally of a good standard throughout the school. Although ICT resources have improved, there are still insufficient computers to allow classroom teachers to teach ICT skills effectively. Teachers have been ingenious in their use of computers, for example, splitting a Year 3 art and design class between painting and a computer paint program or using two classes' computers to cover one lesson. However, the low ratio of machines to pupils means that pupils are not having enough hands-on experience to meet the demanding standards by the end of their final year.

Care, guidance and support

Pupils are well looked after and receive a good level of support and guidance in their academic and personal development. The school takes pupils' views very seriously.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils receive a high level of care in a friendly and secure environment.
- Pupils have a clear understanding of what they need to do to improve.
- Pupils' personal development is very well supported.
- Procedures for listening to, and acting on, pupils' views are very good.

Commentary

21. The school is a warm and friendly community based firmly on Catholic principles with a strong emphasis on care and respect for the individual. Staff are good listeners when pupils have concerns or worries. There is a good level of fully trained expertise on child protection matters. Health and safety is treated seriously with regular inspections of equipment and the premises. First aid cover is good.
22. Pupils' academic development is well supported in English and mathematics through individual and group targets. Pupils know very well what their targets are and consequently have a very clear idea on what they need to do to improve and progress.
23. Support for pupils' personal development is very good. Records of each pupil's progress are well kept and easily accessible. Staff know the pupils very well, through class discussions and circle time, and the regular base meetings.
24. Pupils have a very strong voice in the way the school develops. In addition to the weekly discussions between pupils and their teachers, questionnaires have been used and subject managers regularly interview small groups of pupils to discover what pupils like – and don't like – about the teaching of each subject. This provides the

senior management with the very good opportunities to respond to the views of the pupils on all aspects of school life.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are very well informed about the life of the school and their children's progress.
- Pupils benefit from very good links with a local secondary school.

Commentary

25. The school works hard at keeping parents well informed. The weekly newsletter, introduced since the new headteacher arrived, is a very informative document. It is well-produced, easy to read and contains a wide range of general information on the school, including social events, reminders and updates on school procedures and the names of the current 'children of the week'. It is a very useful document in building a successful partnership between home and school. Each term a curriculum plan for each class is sent home outlining what each class will learn about during the coming term. This is helpful in encouraging parents to be more involved in their children's learning.
26. Parents are kept very well informed about their children's progress. The autumn and spring teacher consultation meetings have been re-organised to make the timing more convenient to working parents. At these meetings, children's targets are reviewed and this encourages parents to be directly involved in their children's learning. Reports, which were of a satisfactory standard last year, have been much improved. This year, they are easier to read, follow a common format throughout the school, and show the National Curriculum level the child is working at. This allows parents to monitor their children's progress more closely.
27. The school has close links with Yorkshire Martyrs, a local secondary school to which the majority of pupils transfer. Older pupils gain significant benefits from these links and are being well prepared for the next stage of education. Pupils have opportunities to be taught by specialist teachers in Spanish, French, cookery, science and sporting skills. This adds significantly to the breadth of their curriculum.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher provides very effective leadership. The leadership of senior staff is good. Management is good, and the governance of the school is sound.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has a very clear vision for the school.
- The monitoring of teaching and standards is rigorous.
- Subject leaders have a good understanding of strengths and weaknesses in their subjects.
- Governors are committed but lack a wider perspective on school development.

Commentary

28. The headteacher is inspiring and leads with tremendous purpose and high expectations. She very quickly identified why standards were not as high as they

should be in Years 3 to 6, and the reasons average and higher attaining pupils were underachieving. The action taken, including the revamping of planning and the introduction of clear targets, has raised teachers' expectations. The weekly monitoring of planning is thorough and small improvements week on week have led to the current position where planning is simple but effective and pupils' progress has improved.

29. A similar well-focused approach to improving teaching has retained teachers' confidence in their abilities but significantly changed their practice. Particular improvements include preparing well-matched work for all pupils, adopting strategies for raising questions and making sure that the last part of the lesson is used to evaluate learning. Expertise where it was previously lacking has been improved through both training sessions and the use of experts in the school. This has contributed to a strong confidence in teaching English, mathematics, science and PE. There is still plenty to do that has been recognised by the headteacher, but this is in hand.
30. The subject co-ordinators have been quickly drawn into the agenda of raising standards. The analysis of data has led to some very demanding targets being set for pupils, culminating in expectations that more than half the pupils will reach above average levels in core subjects within two years. These are challenging but achievable, given the current evidence on the progress made in one year in English and maths. The co-ordinators have improved their awareness of their subjects by evaluating samples of work and talking with pupils to establish the depth of their learning and their knowledge. They have worked quickly to put into place assessment in all subjects to ensure that work in lessons is sufficiently demanding. This, combined with a rigorous evaluation of previous test papers, has led to some very sharp action plans that in a little over two terms have turned achievement around. There is still some lag with new teachers only recently taking on subject responsibilities, some of which, such as art and design have suffered from ad hoc management in the past.
31. The special educational needs co-ordinator is a skilled teacher and provides a very good role model for all colleagues. She is active in promoting good teaching.
32. Relationships with governors have strengthened. They understand more clearly the systems for evaluating the school's performance and have an increasingly clear view of the strengths and weaknesses. Budget planning has largely been linked to maintaining or improving staffing levels and retaining sufficient funds to deal with building improvements. The large carry forward is being wisely used to strengthen staff expertise through in service training and additional specialist support. The building plans have not progressed as fast as they should and there is an outstanding problem with access that the governors and the authority have not yet resolved. This affects the rights of all pupils to have reasonable physical access to all parts of the school, including the school library, for independent studies. This is a statutory requirement and one the governors are not yet meeting.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	606,084	Balance from previous year	21,504
Total expenditure	591,096	Balance carried forward to the next year	36,492
Expenditure per pupil	2,911		

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Children enter Reception with broadly average standards. The provision is very good with good quality resources for learning both in the classroom and outside. The links with parents are good and those with the pre-school group have been strengthened, particularly with the development of

shared planning that covers the two years of the Foundation Stage³. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator has managed this very well. Her determined leadership encourages the partnership with parents and this makes a good contribution to children's achievements.

The planning for activities in the Reception class is very good. The room is set up with activity areas that stimulate children. The grouping of children for activities is flexible so that those with different needs can be catered for. The outside area is used well and the teaching assistants are fully involved in all the activities. They have improved their understanding of the goals for children's learning through the requirement to assess and track children's progress and this ensures they provide good support to children.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very good and children achieve well.
- There are regular opportunities for children to initiate activities and very good relationships lead to very effective emotional development.

Commentary

33. The very good teaching characterised by the good use of time, stimulating resources and deployment of staff leads to very good levels of children's learning through play. This promotes concentration and perseverance very well. The good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities encourages very good independence and collaboration. Adults encourage independent working by providing the necessary equipment in areas of the classroom that are bright and uncluttered. The children are very good at settling into an area accessing the resources they need and playing well on their own or together. They successfully learn how to put things away. Standards of personal and social development are well above average when pupils are ready to start in Year 1.
34. Teaching assistants provide some very good support. They model relationships and turn taking well. There are good opportunities for collaboration in outdoor challenges such as taking part in a 'jungle' adventure and for creating imaginary worlds and for role-play. There are good quality resources for such activities and good storage for them.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Practical and lively teaching of letter sounds contributes to very good achievement in reading and writing.
- Children's talk is encouraged and promoted very well.

Commentary

35. Very good teaching leads to above average standards in all aspects of communication, language and literacy and to some very good achievement. Children respond very enthusiastically to questions, and express their views and feelings very well.

³ Foundation Stage. There are three stages of children's education taught in the primary school. The first stage or Foundation Stage is taught in the Nursery and Reception class.

36. Children's language and communication skills are regularly assessed and the expectations placed on them are well matched to their needs. Children showing slower rates of progress than expected are quickly identified and teaching is adapted to meet their individual needs. There are good opportunities for parents to become involved in the process of teaching reading. The systematic teaching of letters and sounds, the use of large books to promote an enjoyment of books and teaching of specific skills in small groups, leads to some very good achievement.
37. The teaching of writing is very good. Children are given good individual support as they write in small groups with an adult, and are encouraged to use their knowledge of sounds and letters to build words and sentences independently. The majority write, using plausible spelling and simple punctuation. This shows very good achievement in writing, and competencies above that expected for their age. Recently, the children have enjoyed an exciting range of writing opportunities. For example, writing letters to the thank members of the community for visiting them, letters to the travel agents and to the giant after a 'visit' to his castle; and a description of the garden centre.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The well-planned activities contribute to children's good achievement.
- Teaching is very good and the teaching assistants make a positive contribution to learning.

Commentary

38. Assessments show the progress made by children is good and the majority exceed the expectations by the start of Year 1. Most children complete simple calculations, count accurately in ones, twos and tens and have a good understanding of shape and measurement. Overall, children are above average. Teaching is well planned and the activities are stimulating and practical. In one activity, involving the numbers to 100, children quickly learned how to order these numbers and record them from different starting points.
39. The teaching assistant encourages children's talk and use of correct mathematical vocabulary. Support for children in small groups is well organised to ensure all are valued. This leads to good achievement by children of all abilities.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Some very good activities are provided to stimulate an interest and exploration of the real world.

Commentary

40. The themes that much of the learning is based around make a very good contribution to this area of learning. Children learn well and they are exceeding expectations by the time they start in Year 1. Areas in the classroom are set up with a range of activities to encourage the children to explore. For example, the jungle play was well equipped with equipment for explorers to take on their journeys. A collection of photographs shows children enjoying a rich and stimulating range of first hand experiences to develop their knowledge and understanding.
41. Children regularly use the computer to read and write, displaying good control of the mouse. They have also used a programmable toy to develop their understanding of direction, distance and turn.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT AND CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

The provision in these areas was sampled.

42. Inventing scenarios in the jungle and at the swamp made a good contribution to children's **creative development**. Work in progress shows they also used paints and materials to make leaves as part of their work on camouflage. Art materials are made available during child-initiated activities and this provides opportunities to select and use art materials for their own purposes.
43. Pupils use the school hall at least twice a week for **physical development**, using climbing apparatus and small games equipment. They have easy access to wheeled toys and a safe climbing area outside the classroom but there is no covered area in order for them to use these facilities all year.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision for English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All pupils achieve well, although some could spell better.
- Teaching is very good.
- The subject is well led with good attention to the development of a rich and motivational curriculum.
- There are good timetabled opportunities for pupils with literacy difficulties to develop basic reading and writing skills.

Commentary

44. Pupils' achievement is good overall. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards are above average in most aspects of English. Discussion with pupils indicated that they enjoy this subject and see themselves making significant progress as writers, readers and speakers. Pupils have made good progress in their writing, particularly in their grammar skills. Less able pupils are making good progress in reading because of well-targeted literacy support. The good achievement arises largely from the progress made by the average and more able pupils in their writing because of good, and

sometimes very good, teaching. It is well informed, providing a wide range of texts and discussion opportunities. It is also strongly committed to individual development and the acquisition of good working habits. Lessons have pace and a good focus on individual pupil needs.

45. The teacher's planning is detailed and spells out appropriate individual targets for pupils that inform all parts of each lesson. In a very good lesson on retrieving information from text, very good relationships and the use of positive feedback to individual pupils ensured that all remained on task. The good use of the interactive whiteboard, as a means of demonstrating the impact of print, motivated all pupils. The good development of discussion through well targeted questions encouraged each pupil to use more adventurous and technical vocabulary, such as 'scribe', 'interviewer', 'diversity', 'pollution' and 'environmental'. The excitement created by the teacher meant that pupils wanted to use vivid vocabulary themselves, contributing sentences such as "Whales sing amazing songs". The teacher also ensured that pupils understood what was being said, asking "So, what does 'tamper with the eco system' mean?"
46. The concentration on writing over the past year has been very effective in raising standards of presentation, content and quantity. Few, if any, pupils are reluctant to write and most wish to write as much as possible to develop a viewpoint or story. Good support is provided early on for pupils who have co-ordination or presentation difficulties and the expectations in all lessons are high. However, the approach to spelling varies from class to class and this means that spelling skills develop more erratically than other aspects. Overall marking is good and makes good suggestions for how pupils can improve.
47. Much of this success is attributable to the good leadership of the subject manager, who also provides a very good role model for the teaching of English. She has developed an exciting programme of work. Thus, many lessons use topics that link well with history, geography, PSHCE and religious education. The use of letter writing has been particularly successful in raising standards. The inspection team saw letters from Judas Iscariot, from the Spanish Ambassador defending bullfighting and from the tooth fairy. She has improved the forms and use of assessment, and developed a strong partnership with the local education authority advisers who have assisted in the development of the writing curriculum. Clear individual learning objectives have been established within all lessons. The co-ordinator has also been instrumental in developing the use of computer software to enhance her subject and this is a regular feature within most lessons.
48. Good work is carried out with pupils who have learning difficulties. This has been effective and teaching assistants have received training that has significantly improved their teaching of sounds and reading. A number of literacy support groups were seen during the inspection, together with good work on a one-to-one basis for pupils of all ages. The standard of teaching assistant work was uniformly high and pupil work indicated that this has a significant effect on standards overall.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

49. English skills are developed well in many subjects. Staff provide good models of talking and listening which assist this development. There is a good emphasis placed on subject and technical vocabulary in mathematics and ICT. There are also many

opportunities to write for different purposes and different audiences in history and geography lessons.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are above average.
- Year 6 pupils have made good progress this year.
- Teaching is good overall and there is a good curriculum in place.
- Leadership and management are very good.

Commentary

50. The school has made a considerable effort to increase the pupils' rate of progress and there has been rapid improvement this year as a result of good teaching. Achievement is good for children in Years 1 and 2 who were average when joining Year 1. Work in mathematics is challenging all pupils to use their calculation skills and they are developing a secure base of mental arithmetic skills. Pupils' achievement in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory. Pupils are maintaining above average standards in all year groups and the underachievement by more able pupils has been eradicated. By Year 6, pupils confidently use numbers to two decimal places and tackle complex problems involving addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. They draw accurate graphs and successfully use them to interpret information. The recent very good improvement in provision, particularly problem solving and mental arithmetic, is ensuring that challenging targets will be met.
51. The quality of teaching and learning is good with a number of very good lessons observed during the inspection. Teachers provide a wide range of stimulating activities when encouraging pupils to investigate number patterns and simple calculations. They have high expectations of pupils' learning, as shown by their good questioning techniques, clear explanations and work well matched to the pupils' ability. Pupils are regularly given the opportunity to investigate numbers or apply their mathematical knowledge and skills in new and challenging ways, which help to improve their understanding and enjoyment of the subject. Very effective assessment strategies have been introduced to track pupils' progress and pupils are made aware of what they should do to improve. Teachers use this information well to ensure pupils work at tasks that help them move forward.
52. As a result of the recent improvements by the very good subject leader, lessons are well planned and focused on the needs of pupils of different abilities. An effective training programme ensures that teachers now place a very good emphasis on problem solving and the use of appropriate calculations.

Mathematics across the curriculum

53. Mathematics is used well in other subjects and expectations of the standard of mathematical work in these topics are high. This contributes well to the rapid progress now being made by all pupils.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards by the end of Year 2 are above average.
- There is a good emphasis on practical work but not enough challenge for more able pupils.

Commentary

54. Pupils are achieving well in Years 1 and 2 from average attainment when they started in Year 1. The teaching is good with well-planned practical investigations that link pupils' English and mathematical skills to the topics being taught. There is a good emphasis on the technical vocabulary that is being learnt and opportunities for pupils to practise this in discussions and when recording their work.
55. Over the last two years, there has been a greater emphasis on investigative work in Years 3 to 6 and this has contributed to satisfactory achievement and a continuing improvement in standards. More pupils are reaching higher levels and greater proportions of pupils are reaching average standards. This is because of the systematic approach being taken to teaching skills and knowledge through investigative work. Lower attainers benefit from the extra support they receive in lessons prompting discussion and assistance with recording accurately. There is scope to provide even greater challenge for the more able pupils because decisions about what to test, and how to test it, are made for the pupils. They are not challenged to apply scientific skills, and they have little experience of having their own views confirmed or challenged. The attention to scientific vocabulary is too variable, and while teachers are encouraging pupils' own predictions or hypotheses, they do not insist on accurate vocabulary at this point or when writing up conclusions. This is limiting what they could achieve.
56. Pupils work well collaboratively. Links with other subjects are exploited effectively as pupils use their literacy skills well when recording and apply their measurement and data handling skills when observing change or testing their theories. ICT also makes a positive impact on teaching. In a Year 6 lesson, the interactive whiteboard was used effectively to encourage discussions about the factors that attribute to adaptation amongst animals. The rapid pictorial representation of how these factors affected dependant animals ensured pupils gained good scientific understanding of the effects of environmental change.
57. The leadership and management are satisfactory. A good start has been made on checking up on pupils' scientific experiences through the school. Not enough guidance is provided to teachers on how to incorporate scientific language into lessons, particularly during the initial questioning, and to assist with explaining and concluding experimental work. A system for identifying attainment in Years 5 and 6 is in place but there is no rigorous system for tracking progress through Years 3 to 6. This limits teachers' expectations of what some more able pupils could achieve.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision for ICT is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Leadership is good and has moved the subject along well in the past year.
- Achievements in Years 3 to 6 are unsatisfactory.
- Assessment is not detailed enough to identify all areas of individual progress.
- There are not enough computers in class.

Commentary

58. Standards are average in Year 2 but below average in Year 6 despite recent improvement to the curriculum. Subject development has been erratic over the past few years and resulted in patchy development. The recently appointed co-ordinator, together with the ICT-trained teaching assistant, have implemented a scheme of work, a satisfactory tracking system, updated some of the older equipment and secured the help of the LEA advisory teacher. Consequently, teachers' confidence has improved in a short space of time, teaching is satisfactory and standards have begun to rise.
59. The improvements in provision have not had time to work through the system and provide every pupil with the full range of experiences necessary. Thus, while there is now adequate software to support design and presentation work, these have not been available for older pupils to use them. Older pupils show proficiency at word processing and the use of the Internet. The oldest pupils have successfully put together a 20-slide presentation of their residential week and produced books suitable to read to young children. However, they are only just beginning to use programs that control, for example, sequences of lights, or allow pupils to use the full range of graphs to enter and interpret data from mathematics or science.
60. The improvement in teaching results largely from the training to which all staff has had access to. The investment in regular technical support is very beneficial. This ensures that computer and programs work, but it also frees up the time of the two specialist members of staff to teach ICT. A specialist teaching assistant provides very good leadership in the development of software and is about to take on a whole-school role, which allows her to provide advice and support to colleagues as well as demonstrating good practice within all classes.
61. The recently appointed subject manager has been quick to draw governors' attention to the shortage of computers and plans are in hand to utilise an element of the school's budget surplus to address this next year. Although she has introduced a system for tracking pupils' ICT experiences, the co-ordinator has not had time to implement a detailed assessment system. Therefore, adults are not always clear exactly what individual pupils know and what they need to learn next.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

62. The new interactive whiteboards, programs and training have combined to ensure an adequate use of ICT in other subjects. The hardware available and the fact that pupils do not yet regularly use the Internet restrict this work. Each classroom has six computers and, when specific ICT skills need to be taught, this is not enough. Pupils' progress is curtailed by the fact they may have to work three to a computer, or in an adjacent classroom. The school has plans to introduce a 'mobile classroom' set of computers, but until then, hardware places a significant constraint on the further development of computer skills.

HUMANITIES

No lessons were seen and pupils' work was sampled in geography and history.

History

63. In Years 2 and 6, standards in **history** are similar to those expected. Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 have been taught a satisfactory range of skills in history and their work is linked well to developing literacy skills. Year 2 pupils wrote letters in the role of Florence Nightingale, describing vividly the conditions at the hospital at Scutari. Pupils compared the washing routines of the past and present and made some good observations based on what they knew about modern technology. A good range of visits has supplemented the teaching in Years 3 to 6. For example, Year 6 pupils, learning about the history of the National Health Service, visited a local hospital and gained a greater insight into health care today. Visits to Shibden Hall and the Eccleshill Industrial Museum have helped pupils understand how people used to live in Victorian times.

Geography

64. A satisfactory range of work in **geography** has been covered. Pupils in Year 2 have researched and mapped the local area. They recorded on maps how the environment has changed over time and linked this well to changes in everyday foods and farming. Year 6 pupils completed a challenging study of the equatorial rainforests of the world that developed research and mapping skills well. They arrived at some well-argued conclusions on the consequences of destroying the rainforests, based on this research.
65. The subjects are well led. Following the recent curriculum developments, there is a renewed focus on planning topics that extend research skills, rather than merely acquiring knowledge. The lesson plans are thorough and show the expectations of what pupils are to learn and what new skills are being introduced. Plans are in hand to extend history and geography into other curriculum areas following the success of the multicultural Arts Week.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Music

66. Only two lessons were observed in **music**. These, together with observation of assemblies and discussions with the co-ordinator and pupils, indicated a good variety of singing experiences and music across a wide range of cultures. As a result, singing is tuneful and enthusiastic. Pupils also enjoy composition and performance. The school gives pupils the opportunity to sing outside the school and there are a number of singing and recorder clubs which are popular with pupils. The co-ordinator has arranged visits from music and dance specialists and this has strengthened the curriculum provision.
67. The development of the subject and the enhancement of pupil skills are constrained by the lack of musical expertise within the staff. The school is seeking to appoint a well-qualified member of staff as a priority.

Art and design

68. **Art and design** was sampled. Insufficient lessons were observed to judge overall provision. Two lessons were observed; one in Year 3 and one in Year 6. Work was also sampled from pupils in Year 4 and Year 5. Standards are below those expected. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of the works of other artists, by the end of Year 6, is poor. The work from around the school indicates the oldest pupils have only basic drawing and painting skills. The work also shows uncertainties about how to compose paintings. The artwork around the school shows care and attention but very little that is original or exciting.
69. The management of the subject has changed hands frequently. The co-ordinator has been in post since January. She has quickly grasped an understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject, through work sampling and discussions with pupils. As a result, she has prepared an action plan to raise the profile of art in the school. The linking of artwork to literacy as a starting point for practical work is particularly effective and serves to motivate pupils. However, teachers' subject knowledge is weak, and they lack confidence in how to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding and therefore artistic skills are not taught effectively.

Design and technology

70. Work in **design and technology** was sampled. Standards are average and better than when the school was last inspected. The issues have been addressed, although there is still further work on developing a tracking system that ensures teachers have a clear understanding of the skills rather than just the experiences pupils have gained through the school. A good range of work supports pupils' learning. From the sample of work it is evident that teaching strongly promotes and encourages the pupils' design and evaluation of their work. Pupils use an increasing range of tools, materials and components through including textiles, wood and plastics in their work. The linking to other subjects, such as making musical instruments for their own mystery story, is effective. The only gap in pupils' experiences is in control because teachers' knowledge and understanding of ICT is weaker. The co-ordinator is well organised and the expertise is spread well through the school with teachers sharing responsibility for teaching and planning between classes. The recent monitoring programme has usefully identified priorities for development.

Physical Education (PE)

Provision in PE is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is now a good planned programme that includes all aspects of the subject.

Commentary

71. Teachers' knowledge of PE is good, lessons are well planned and there are high expectations of what can be achieved. Standards are above the expected levels in games, swimming and gymnastics; pupils are enthusiastic and fit. Teachers continually challenge pupils to improve their performance and make effective use of demonstration and evaluation.
72. There are a very good number of sporting extra-curricular activities and the school is committed to regular participation in inter-school competitions to give pupils more enjoyment of sport. The planning of the curriculum has improved since the last inspection and more time and attention are given to the subject with specialist input from local clubs and other schools. There are three periods a week for physical education and those pupils with physical needs have additional lessons on alternate days. Swimming has now been included in the programme so ensuring a balanced programme of activity. The co-ordinator is keen and enthusiastic. She has taken the initiative from the headteacher in extending links with a local secondary school PE department to introduce a range of sports into the timetable that further extend pupils' experiences and provide a useful source of staff training.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

73. The school's very good ethos contributes positively to pupils' development as effective citizens as well as to their personal and social education. The school provides good opportunities for all pupils to take responsibility and there are significant opportunities for pupils to provide support and advice to younger pupils. For example, acting as base monitors, participants in the school council, playground friends and lunchtime monitors. All of these responsibilities assist in the development of pupils' maturity, while contributing well to the calm and purposeful atmosphere within the school.

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	3

Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	3
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	3
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3

The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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