

INSPECTION REPORT

**ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST CofE VA
INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL**

Newbury

LEA area: West Berkshire

Unique reference number: 110093

Headteacher: Mrs J Goodenough

Lead inspector: Anna Sketchley

Dates of inspection: 18th – 20th April 2005

Inspection number: 267809

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant
School category: Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils: 3 – 7
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 216

School address: Old Newtown Road
Newbury
Berkshire
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Telephone number: 01635 41281
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Appropriate authority: The governing body
Name of chair of governors: Father Bernard Dagnall

Date of previous inspection: 30th November 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St John the Evangelist is an average-sized infant and nursery school for boys and girls aged 3 – 7. It has 179 pupils organised into six classes, and 37 children who attend part-time in the nursery. The school is situated in the heart of Newbury. It is a popular school and usually oversubscribed, drawing its pupils from a wide area. It has Voluntary Aided Church of England status and, as a result, has a strong Christian ethos. It serves families from a range of social circumstances but, taken together, these are more favourable than the national picture. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. Overall, pupils' attainment when they start school is similar to that expected for their ages. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs is broadly in line with the national average and almost all of these needs are concerned with moderate learning difficulties. One pupil has a statement to outline a particular need. The great majority of pupils come from white British backgrounds and only four are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language. In 2004, the school gained a Healthy Schools Award. It is seeking to achieve an Artsmark in the near future because of its commitment to providing a full range of arts experiences through music, dance and art and design.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
27225	Anna Sketchley	Lead inspector	Mathematics, science, design and technology, music
9454	Deborah Pepper	Lay inspector	
23487	Pat Kitley	Team inspector	English, history, geography, physical education, special educational needs, English as an additional language
10226	Susan Senior	Team inspector	Foundation Stage, art and design, information and communication technology

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	8
Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	10
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	15
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS	17
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	27

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

St John the Evangelist is a good, effective school with some very strong features. The school's Christian values underpin all its work. This results in a very warm, caring school with very good relationships between adults and pupils. The pupils enjoy coming to school and, because of the very good provision for their personal development, they develop very good attitudes to school life. Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds achieve well because of the good teaching and positive environment for learning. The school is well led and managed and provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are

- Provision for pupils' spiritual development is excellent, encouraging them to reflect on their experiences and to explore values and beliefs
- Pupils' achievement in art is excellent; the high quality of their work is a strength of the school
- Standards in speaking and listening are well above average, helping pupils to make good progress in lessons
- Leadership, management and governance are all good and are guiding the school well through a period of considerable change
- The quality of teaching is good and helps pupils to achieve well, but there are weaknesses in
 - a few lessons
 - The curriculum is significantly enriched by a range of very good additional activities.

Since the school was inspected in 1998, improvement has been good. The school has dealt with all the key issues from the previous inspection, with particular improvement in the provision for higher attaining pupils. Despite a fall in the attainment of pupils when they join the school, from above average at the last inspection to average, standards at the end of Year 2 in English have improved from average to above average. Standards in mathematics and science have been maintained. The emphasis on investigative work in science has improved considerably. Pupils' achievement in art has improved from good to excellent. The headteacher's wise and secure leadership, and good, shared management of change with staff and the governing body, provide a firm basis for further improvement in standards.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
Reading	B	C	B	B
Writing	C	E	D	D
Mathematics	B	C	B	B

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average
Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals*

Pupils' achievement is good. When children join the nursery, overall attainment is about the same as that expected for their ages. In the Foundation Stage (nursery and reception classes) most children achieve well in all areas of learning except mathematical

development where achievement is satisfactory. Most children are on track to reach the goals expected nationally by the time they join Year 1, and some will exceed them. In Years 1 and 2, owing to good teaching, pupils achieve well in English and mathematics. By the end of Year 2, standards in reading and mathematics are above average. During the inspection, standards in writing were judged to have improved since the results shown in the table above because of new initiatives introduced by the school. Standards in writing are now average and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Standards in art are excellent and a strength of the school. The subject makes a very good contribution to other areas of the curriculum. Standards are also above average in design and technology, geography and history. Pupils who have special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language do as well as other pupils. Gifted and talented pupils achieve well.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are fostered very well. The school is particularly effective in the very good ethos it creates through its Christian values. The spiritual dimension is excellent and threads through all other aspects of school life. As a result, pupils' personal development is very good. They have very positive attitudes to work, genuinely care for one another, are thoughtful and polite to everyone around them, and almost always behave well in lessons. Attendance and punctuality are both good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good.

The quality of teaching is good with some very good features. Teachers build and sustain very good relationships with pupils, creating a very positive learning environment across the school, thereby helping pupils learn quickly and confidently. In nursery and reception a wide range of well organised and interesting activities helps children to learn independently. Direct teaching sessions in literacy and numeracy are not always long enough or followed up sufficiently to enable children to consolidate their learning as much as they might. In Years 1 and 2, the wide range of effective teaching methods and resources is particularly successful. For example, the skill with which teachers use computers, and a computer display on a large screen, makes a significant contribution to pupils' interest and attention. The high emphasis on practical tasks, especially in mathematics and science, motivates pupils and supports them well in their learning. Lessons are well planned and teachers have very good subject knowledge and questioning techniques. Tasks are almost always correctly matched to pupils' needs and are challenging, ensuring that they make good progress. Teaching assistants are very effective and their expertise is a strength of the school. This ensures that pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to all others. In a few lessons seen, some pupils became over excited and, where teachers' behaviour management skills were not strong enough, this slowed the pace of learning.

The good curriculum provides particularly rich opportunities for creativity, and very effective links are made between this and other subjects. Visits and visitors enliven pupils' learning and make a definite impact upon standards. A wide variety of lunchtime clubs provides significant enrichment for older pupils. The school has created a stimulating learning environment and the accommodation is very good and very well cared for. The recent addition of large computer screens is making a significant impact upon the use of information and communication technology (ICT) across the curriculum. In the Foundation Stage, the curriculum and environment, particularly the outdoor space, is rich and well organised. The school has created good partnerships with its parents, the local community and other schools.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. Following a long period of stability, the school has recently experienced several unavoidable staff changes. The experienced headteacher is providing good leadership and management and, together with the effective governing body, is maintaining the security and calm that is so much a part of the school's ethos. The

school is well managed and is not complacent. The good leadership of key staff contributes to this. Through careful evaluation and the introduction of new initiatives, it constantly strives to improve its performance. Governors work hard, in the interests of the school, to provide the right balance of support and challenge.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have very positive views of the school and the great majority feel their children are doing well. Pupils enjoy coming to school and feel particularly secure in the knowledge that there is always someone to whom they can go if they have a problem.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important thing the school should do to build upon its current success is

- Ensure that the quality of teaching is consistently good across the school

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils' achievement is good overall. In the Foundation Stage (nursery and reception classes), the children make good progress in all areas of learning except mathematical development where progress is satisfactory. In Years 1 and 2, good teaching helps pupils to achieve well in reading, mathematics and science and, by the end of Year 2, standards in these subjects are above average. Higher attaining pupils make good progress in all subjects, which is an improvement since the last inspection. By the end of Year 2, standards in writing are average. Standards in art are very high and a strength of the school. The subject makes a very good contribution to other areas of the curriculum. Pupils achieve well in most other subjects and, by the end of Year 2, standards are above average in design and technology, geography, history and physical education. Achievement in ICT is satisfactory and standards are average because, although the subject is well used across the curriculum to enhance learning in other subjects, there is too little teaching of specific skills. It is not possible to judge standards and achievement in music because not enough was seen during the inspection. Pupils who have special educational needs and whose first language is not English do as well as other pupils.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in reading, mathematics and science because the teaching is good
- Standards in art are very high, owing to a rich curriculum and very good teaching
- Standards in most other subjects are above average
- Higher attaining pupils are well challenged by the work they are given, and so they achieve well
- Although children in the Foundation Stage make satisfactory progress in their mathematical development, it is not as good as in other areas of learning

Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	16.6 (15.8)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	14.2 (13.3)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	17.1 (16.5)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 65 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

1. The school's performance in the 2004 Year 2 national tests was above average in reading but below average in writing. Mathematics results and teacher assessments in science were above average. Results over the past three years have fluctuated but, overall, they have improved at a faster rate than for most schools. In comparison with those with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, the 2004 results were above average in reading and mathematics, but below average in writing. Given that children start school with attainment that is average overall, the test results, and the standard of work seen in pupils' books, represent good achievement in English, mathematics and science. Good teaching in these subjects throughout the school, with a significant proportion of very good teaching, means that pupils make good progress at each stage, building their knowledge, skills and understanding well. The very positive environment for learning, with high expectations of what pupils can achieve, plays a significant part in giving each child the confidence to be successful.

Foundation Stage (nursery and reception classes)

2. Children achieve well in personal, creative and physical development and their understanding of the world around them because they are offered a rich and well-resourced environment. The outside area is particularly well organised. Achievement in mathematical development in the reception classes is satisfactory. This is because number skills are not taught directly on a daily basis, sessions are short and they are not always followed up with activities to reinforce learning. Although children's achievement in communication, language and literacy is good overall, there are aspects of reading and writing in which progress is satisfactory because, although taught daily, direct teaching sessions are, again, sometimes too short and not always followed up with activities to support further learning. Children make good progress with spelling, handwriting and speaking and listening. Despite one third of the children having just started fulltime in reception at the time of the inspection, most children are on track in all areas of learning to reach the goals expected nationally, and some will exceed them, by the time they join Year 1.

Pupils in Year 1 and 2

3. Pupils achieve well because the teaching is good with some significantly good features and this supports pupils' learning effectively. Although results in writing were below average in the 2004 tests, during the inspection standards were judged to have improved. This is because of successful initiatives introduced by the school, particularly teaching in ability groups for two sessions a week and giving extra support to lower attaining pupils. Achievement in writing is now satisfactory and standards are average. Good opportunities for pupils to practise their speaking and listening skills in English and in other subjects, especially when asked to explain answers, result in standards that are well above average. Achievement is good in mathematics and science because of the emphasis teachers place on practical tasks that are well matched to pupils' needs. The large computer screens are a very well used teaching tool and make a significant contribution to mathematical development and to the progress of pupils with special educational needs. Well-organised investigative work is helping pupils to achieve well in science. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language make the same good progress as other children because they are very well supported by highly trained teaching assistants. More able pupils are challenged in lessons and as a result achieve well. Standards in all subjects have been maintained or have improved since the last inspection.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils have very good attitudes to all aspects of school life. Behaviour is good overall. Attendance is well above the national average and punctuality is good. The school makes very good provision for pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and this is a strength of the school. Provision for spiritual development is excellent. The school has maintained the high standards noted at the previous inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are very keen to be involved in lessons and all other school activities
- Behaviour is generally good in lessons and in the playground
- Pupils are usually kind and polite to each other and adults
- Provision for reflection and exploration of faith, values and feelings is excellent
- Provision for cultural, moral and social development is very good On a few occasions, pupils call out inappropriately in class

Commentary

4. Pupils enjoy coming to school to learn and to play with their friends. In lessons, pupils are interested and involved because teachers use good teaching methods and very good

resources. Pupils eagerly and respectfully take part in all the activities on offer. An example of this was seen in a very good lesson in which the teacher's personal experience and the first hand learning she planned through dress, artefacts, food and musical instruments made a significant contribution to pupils' understanding of Indian life and culture. Three quarters of the Year 2 pupils take up opportunities for lunchtime clubs. Pupils also particularly enjoy visitors to school and visits they make from school.

5. Pupils generally behave well in lessons and around the school, including in the playground. When teaching is very good they behave very well because they are interested in what they are learning. Pupils enjoy very good relationships with each other and adults in the school, and are usually kind and polite. A Year 1 child explained how when an argument with a friend was resolved they shook hands. Pupils work well together in pairs and groups. For example, a group in Year 1 successfully divided up the tasks they needed to complete to prepare a poster. These very good relationships, good behaviour and very good social skills derive from the school's very good provision for pupils' moral and social development. Instances of bullying are rare but are dealt with promptly, and pupils are taught a range of strategies to resolve problems with other children. There have been no exclusions. A race equality policy is in place.
6. The school's very strong Christian ethos underpins the excellent provision for pupils' spiritual development. The parish priest is a much-loved member of the school and comes in very regularly for assemblies and to help in class. Pupils have a mature understanding of, and insights into, the Christian faith. For example, a child with special educational needs explained why his favourite Bible story, the Last Supper, was significant. Through stories, pictures, writing and discussion, pupils explore issues including 'sharing is important' and 'being a peacemaker'. They are articulate and thoughtful in expressing their views. Very good use is made of the role play areas, drama and artefacts to explore different faiths. For example, a Year 2 role play area was prepared for Passover. Lessons include moments of wonder. In an excellent dance lesson, there was a frisson of excitement when pupils began a journey through the jungle looking for animals.
7. Provision for cultural and multicultural education is very good. Pupils have many opportunities in art to develop their artistic skills to a high standard through learning about artists and exploring other cultures. The school provides pupils with first-hand opportunities to explore other cultures, for example through fundraising for a school in Ghana visited by the parish priest. There are also opportunities in lessons, such as when Year 2 pupils explored Indian culture and geography through maps, artefacts and personal experiences.
8. In a few lessons, where teachers do not insist on the 'hands up' rule, pupils call out answers to questions. As a result, noise levels can rise and the pace of the lesson slows. Boys can dominate in these situations and girls are not always sufficiently involved by the teacher. A few pupils can also be restless during whole-class teaching and assemblies and do not concentrate well enough. Although the behaviour policy contains much useful material, there are no clear school-wide systems for rewards and sanctions.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	3.4	School data	0.4
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a good quality education. Teaching and learning are good, with some very good features. The curriculum is good and is enriched by a very good range of extra-curricular opportunities. There are good partnerships with parents, the local community and other schools. Pupils are very well cared for and relationships between adults and pupils are very good.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teaching in the nursery and reception classes is satisfactory with some good and very good lessons, providing children with a good start at school. Throughout Years 1 and 2, teaching is good with a substantial amount of very good, occasionally excellent, teaching. Good systems for assessing pupils' attainment help teachers to plan the next steps in learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers make very effective use of a variety of teaching methods and high-quality resources which helps pupils to achieve well
- Lessons are carefully planned and well organised, with practical tasks that are well matched to meet the different needs of all pupils
- Teaching assistants support pupils' learning very well
- Teachers have very good relationships with pupils but, occasionally, behaviour management is not strong enough and so the pace of learning slackens
- In the Foundation Stage, there is insufficient emphasis on the direct teaching of mathematics and English

Commentary

9. The skill with which teachers use a computer linked to a large screen makes a significant contribution to pupils' interest, attention and achievement. Using this technology, work on a large number square totally engaged Year 2 pupils, who all concentrated very hard whilst learning to count backwards and forwards in tens. Many good lessons are characterised by pupils using appropriate computer programs, encouraging them to work independently in pairs and take control of their own learning. These tasks also enable them to practise and significantly enhance their computer skills. By using individual whiteboards during mental mathematics and spelling, all pupils can contribute a quick answer. This ensures a good pace to the learning and enables the teacher to assess at a glance who has understood. During a Year 2 geography lesson about life in India, the range of artefacts and vibrant displays excited the children and made them keen to ask questions. The use of a large computer screen for a slide show helped to set the right atmosphere, and pupils' enjoyment and interest were obvious.
10. In almost all lessons, all pupils achieve well because tasks are practical and well matched to their ability. For example in science all pupils enhance their skills because they are almost constantly engaged in practical investigations. In all subjects lessons are carefully planned and well organised. Learning intentions are shared with pupils so that they know what they are expected to learn. Teachers return to the learning intention at the end of the lesson and assess pupils' learning through good questioning techniques. In this way, a careful check is kept on pupils' progress. Teaching assistants demonstrate considerable expertise and are very well deployed. Both teachers and learning support assistants know when individual children need help. Well established communications between teachers and other adults in the room results in a good balance between support to help pupils' understanding and opportunities for them to work independently. For example, when learning support assistants give discrete support to lower attaining pupils so that they can rehearse an answer before being called on by the class teacher. This is very effective practice and makes a considerable contribution to pupils' learning, particularly where pupils have special educational needs or are learning English as an additional language. Teaching assistants are a strength of the school.
11. Both teachers and assistants have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and most pupils respond very well because of the good relationships adults create with them. Teaching assistants are sometimes used to help the very few pupils with behaviour difficulties to listen carefully and complete tasks. This is successful because of the positive strategies they use. However, occasionally in a small minority of lessons, especially when there are exciting opportunities for learning, teachers' management of pupils' behaviour is not strong enough. "Calling out" by pupils and an excited response reduces the pace of learning so that they do not achieve as much as they could.
12. Children in the Foundation Stage do not make as much progress as they could in mathematical development because number sessions are not taught daily. Although teachers do plan for number within the wider curriculum, and children are able to choose number games and activities, there are insufficient taught times throughout the week. When teachers do teach mathematics directly, the session is very short and not followed up or

reinforced. This adversely affects the balance between teacher-directed learning and the times when children learn through exploration and play. A similar weakness was found in some aspects of the teaching of English.

13. The school has good systems for assessing and recording pupils' attainment, especially in English. The results of assessments and the school tracking of individual pupil progress are used well to set pupils' individual learning targets and to plan future teaching. The procedures for marking of pupils' work are not consistent across all subjects, although a new and effective system has been introduced in English. This provides a good model for other subjects because it helps pupils to know what they could do next to improve.
14. Teaching standards have improved since the last inspection. The school has maintained the very good aspects identified in the last inspection and has improved those areas identified as in need of attention. For example more challenge for higher attaining pupils is now evident in almost all lessons.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 25 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1	9	10	5	0	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

The curriculum

The school provides a good curriculum enriched by a very good range of additional activities. Accommodation is very good. Resources are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Adaptations to the curriculum provide very good opportunities to develop pupils' creativity
- In the reception classes, insufficient time is allocated for the teaching of literacy and numeracy
- Visits to places of interest and visitors to the school enrich the curriculum
- A very good range of lunch-time clubs is well attended by older pupils
- The new large computer screens have substantially improved the use of ICT across the curriculum
- The high quality accommodation provides a stimulating learning environment, but there is limited outside space for sports

Commentary

15. The school makes good provision for pupils' learning by providing a broad and balanced curriculum in which there is as an appropriate emphasis, in Years 1 and 2, upon the development of literacy and numeracy skills. This has led to the maintenance of good standards in mathematics and improving standards in literacy. The school follows national planning guidance in the teaching of most subjects, including for children in the nursery and reception classes. In the reception classes, however, too little time is devoted to the direct teaching of literacy and numeracy. The school has developed creative approaches to the curriculum through cross-curricular topics and innovations such as Arts Week and Africa Week. All pupils enjoy the weekly creativity afternoons where they attend a carousel of good quality music, dance and drama sessions, which place an emphasis upon performing, speaking and listening. Good provision is made for pupils' personal development through subjects such as art and design, music, dance, physical education and through circle time. Visits from the nurse to discuss healthy living, focus weeks such as Food Awareness Week, and involvement in the Healthy Schools Award enhance this provision. The planning of lessons takes good account of pupils' differing needs. This is particularly evident in classes when pupils are set for

mathematics and writing. The school caters very well for higher-attaining pupils and well for those who have special educational needs. The curriculum supports the achievement of all pupils and effectively prepares pupils in Year 2 to move onto their next school with confidence.

16. Teachers and support staff are aware of the needs of pupils identified as requiring additional help, including the gifted and talented. Provision for those who have special educational needs is good. The planning framework ensures that work is appropriately matched to the needs of groups and individual pupils. Extra group work is very well planned to ensure that pupils working with the special needs co-ordinator and her assistant cover the same range of work as others in the class. Specific help from specialist speech and language teachers provides advice and additional support for speech and language therapy and additional support for the few pupils who arrive with little English.
17. The school provides very good opportunities to extend the curriculum. Most parents agree there is a very good range of lunch-time activities, such as gardening, recorder, gymnastics, art, pottery, chess and sewing, which are interesting and enjoyable. There is a limited amount of sport because the school lacks a large playing area, but indoor cricket and ball skills clubs often operate. A high percentage of Year 2 pupils attend at least one club a week. The extensive range of visitors, such as authors and designers, and support from parents with specialist skills in dance and art, provide pupils with stimulating and enjoyable creative experiences. Visits to places of interest such as the theatre, Hampton Court, the library and local shops make good connections between information learned in class, especially in geography, history and drama, and the world outside. The good standard of the curriculum has been maintained since the last inspection.
18. Staffing is good overall. Teachers are well qualified and have good expertise in the subjects they teach. Provision of teaching assistants is very good. The school is well resourced and this helps teachers when they plan their lessons. The very good resources for art are reflected in the high quality of the work produced. The newly-acquired large computer screens have made a considerable impact upon the teachers' use of ICT to enhance learning in all areas of the curriculum. The accommodation, including the outside space for the nursery and reception classes, is well organised and attractive. The clean, well maintained accommodation, which has high quality displays, provides a stimulating learning environment for all pupils.

Care, guidance and support

The school makes very good provision for the care and welfare of its pupils. The quality of support and guidance is good. Arrangements for involving pupils in the life of the school are good. The standards of the previous inspection have been maintained.

Main strengths

- The staff are genuinely caring in their relationships with pupils
- The school provides a very safe and secure environment for learning and working
- Pupils have a clear understanding of the requirements for healthy living
- The staff respond well to pupils' academic and personal development needs, including pupils with special educational needs
- Pupils' views are incorporated into various aspects of the school's life

Commentary

19. The school's Christian values are evident in the genuine care that adults have for the welfare, learning and personal development of pupils. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, enjoy very supportive relationships with adults who understand, and seek to meet, their needs. Pupils and parents particularly value this aspect of the school's work.
20. The school is very safe, secure and clean. Health and safety procedures are in place and governors are involved in an annual inspection of the site. Risk assessments have only

been carried out in relation to school trips, but school procedures are reviewed in the light of experience, for example those concerning how nursery parents deliver their children. Good arrangements are in place to meet pupils' medical and first aid needs. Child protection has a high profile, with refresher training for staff at the beginning of each autumn term, and pupil welfare as a standing item at weekly staff meetings and the monthly teaching assistants' meetings.

21. Through the Healthy Schools initiative, pupils have developed a good understanding of the need for a good diet, regular exercise and good standards of personal hygiene. The school has worked actively to improve the quality of school lunches by managing the school's kitchen in house, introducing a healthy 'pick'n'mix' picnic lunch option and a 'healthy snack' at morning breaktime. School meals are nutritious and well cooked.
22. The staff provide good quality support and guidance for pupils, based on their understanding of pupils' needs, even though personal development is not assessed formally. Pupils with special educational needs receive good, sometimes very good, support in relation to academic and behavioural targets. Adults emphasise what pupils should do to meet the required standards of behaviour and reward efforts by pupils to achieve them. However, the expertise which some staff have of particular types of special educational needs, for example autism, is not shared widely enough among colleagues. Target setting for pupils has recently been introduced for writing in Year 2 through the 'success ladders' where they aim to achieve specific objectives for different genres of writing. This good practice has yet to be extended to other subjects or across the school.
23. Pupils' views have been sought on several issues. Small groups met in Year 2 to discuss bullying, which led to the introduction of the 'friendship stop' and 'playground buddies'. Pupils were also involved in recent changes to the library, including choices of new books and furniture. Pupils are encouraged to review their learning by using the 'thinking book' at the beginning and end of topics to record what they would like to learn and what they have learnt. There is currently no school council.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has good and effective links with parents, which support pupils' learning well. The quality of links with the community and other schools is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of information for parents is generally good
- The large team of parent helpers is well prepared for its work in school and makes a significant contribution to pupils' learning
- Links with St John's Church are very strong and contribute much to the ethos of the school
- The school has good links with its feeder junior school and local playgroups, which ensure a smooth transfer from one stage of education to the next
- The school responds to parents' comments, but it has not yet carried out a comprehensive parent survey
- Curriculum information is rather inconsistent and this was commented on by some parents

Commentary

24. Information for parents is generally of good quality. Reports include clear information about what pupils know and can do, but they do not include targets or pupils' own comments. The prospectus is informative and parents of children entering the Foundation Stage receive a helpful information pack. Newsletters are issued half termly and include a diary of events. Three parents' meetings are held annually, one of which is a curriculum meeting. Parents

find it easy to speak to teachers about day-to-day issues on an informal basis and see staff as approachable and responsive to their concerns.

25. Parents help at school in many capacities, including in the library, with early morning reading, on trips and visits and 'groundforce' days. This increases the sense of community at the school and supports pupils' learning well. Parents are given training in how to support reading and on health and safety issues.
26. The school is closely involved with St John's Church and parish, particularly through the involvement of the parish priest and other members of the congregation, who visit the school. The school holds termly services at the church and school activities are announced at Sunday services. These links contribute much to the ethos of the school. Pupils sing carols at a local day centre for the elderly. The school has not sought to develop links with local businesses.
27. There is a planned induction process for Year 2 pupils moving to the junior school which includes a school visit and shared sports' day. Reception staff meet regularly with local playgroups as part of an early years' cluster group and also through individual visits. These links with other schools and groups help to ensure a smooth transition for all pupils.
28. The school reviews its arrangements in response to parents' comments. For example, the format of reports in the reception class will change this year and the timing of parents' evenings has been changed following feedback from parents. A joint survey of parents' views on provision for higher attaining pupils was carried out last year in conjunction with the feeder junior school. However, the school has not sought parents' views more widely.
29. A few parents commented that they would like more information about the curriculum in order to support their children's learning. Although some year groups do provide some information, this is rather inconsistent and sometimes quite limited. The good links with parents reported at the last inspection have been maintained.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The headteacher and other key staff lead and manage the school well. Governors are effective and carry out their responsibilities well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has led the school successfully through a period of considerable change
- Teachers, classroom assistants and other staff are a committed and hard working team
- The governing body has a clear focus on improving the quality of provision
- Improved management systems are beginning to raise standards in English
- Priorities within the school development plan are not clearly enough defined

Commentary

30. The experienced headteacher provides good leadership. Her clear vision for a caring school, where each pupil is valued and nurtured is promoted very well across the school. As well as being committed to pupils' personal development she has demonstrated her continuing commitment to raising standards and this has resulted in good improvement since the last inspection. She has successfully steered the school through its change from Grant Maintained to Voluntary Aided status. After a period of considerable stability, the school is faced with a number of unavoidable staff changes, partly due to the promotion of the deputy. The headteacher and deputy have been a strong partnership and together with other senior teachers they have welded together a team of teachers and assistants who are supportive of one another and work very well together to raise standards. However, systems for the induction of staff new to the school and the profession are good. Teachers feel valued and speak well of the high levels of support they receive from the headteacher and deputy. The headteacher is keen to develop staff expertise, and so arrangements

for the continuing professional development of staff are good. As a result, two successive deputies have moved to take up headships.

31. Overall, leadership and management by key staff are good and have improved since the time of the last report because performance reviews are informed by regular monitoring of teaching and learning by the headteacher and deputy and used well to set targets for key staff. This provides a good role model and as a result, most co-ordinators now have a good understanding of how to improve provision in their subjects. The very good work undertaken to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in English provides the school with a model that can be used effectively to reinforce systems in the other core subjects. It will also support less-experienced staff in feeding back to colleagues. The schools' comprehensive and well managed system for tracking individual pupil progress in English, mathematics and science is monitored every term and discussed between the headteacher and subject leaders. This ensures that pupils' learning needs are met and that they meet their predicted targets.
32. The management of special educational needs and provision for the few pupils for whom English is an additional language is good. All staff work closely with the co-ordinator, and the teaching assistants are very well trained and committed members of the team. There is a named governor responsible for overseeing special needs and designated funds are used appropriately.
33. The governing body plays an active role in shaping the direction of the school and offers good support and challenge to the headteacher. Over the years, alongside the headteacher, it has guided the school through some major changes, the most recent one being its change from a Grant Maintained school to Voluntary Aided Church of England status. Through a well organised committee structure and regular reports from both the headteacher and teaching staff, governors ensure they are knowledgeable about the life and work of the school. Their effective monitoring systems keep them abreast of pupil standards and achievements. They recognise the need to re-appoint a clerk to ensure that they undertake their statutory responsibilities more efficiently. Recently appointed governors are beginning to play a fuller part in planning the way forward. Governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities appropriately.
34. There are good self evaluation procedures in place which are helping the school to meet its targets in terms of raising standards. Last year, for example, results of self evaluation raised concerns about standards in writing and reading. This caused the school to change some aspects of its organisation and teaching, especially for the lower attaining pupils. The inspection team found that this has been successful in raising standards this year. The school follows the local education authority procedure for school improvement planning resulting in a development plan which is thorough, detailed and aims to raise standards. However, the number of priorities, length and detail make it unwieldy and, as a result, its focus is insufficiently sharp for it to be a successful tool for improvement. Governors and the headteacher are already aware of this and are addressing the issue. The arrangements for the financial management of the school are good. The school has effective financial routines that are understood and followed. The headteacher has successfully managed funding to provide additional staffing so that the needs of children who join the nursery at different times during the year, and pupils with special educational needs, are well met.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	554,454
Total expenditure	564,251
Expenditure per pupil	2,612

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	20,921
Balance carried forward to the next	11,124

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE (nursery and reception classes)

35. Provision for learning in the nursery and reception classes is good overall, providing a good start to school. When children join the nursery, attainment is average overall, with strengths in physical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. Most children, except those with special educational needs, are on course to meet, and some will exceed, the expected standards in all areas of learning by the time they join Year 1. At the time of the inspection, over one third of the children had just joined the reception classes fulltime and, taking this into consideration, children's achievement is good overall. The breadth of curricular opportunities is good. During the inspection, however, insufficient direct teaching time was given to children's mathematical development. The school explained that the timetable had been changed to facilitate and support the new children. Occasionally, in reception, children were engaged in their own chosen activities without sufficient adult interaction to reinforce and extend their learning.
36. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Good teaching was seen during sessions when a group worked with the teacher for a specific purpose, such as recording predictions about seeds or sorting coins. Very good teaching was observed in physical development. However, teacher-directed sessions in literacy and numeracy are often too short and are not always followed by activities for all children that reinforce and consolidate their learning. As a result, although pupils achieve well overall when taking into account all six areas of learning, the impact of the teaching in literacy and numeracy is diluted. However, discussion with teachers revealed that literacy and numeracy sessions become longer and more focussed as the summer term progresses in preparation for Year 1. This is to allow the youngest pupils, admitted fulltime at the beginning of the summer term, to adjust to the change from nursery to reception. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to the direct teaching of groups and, particularly in the nursery, interact well with children to sustain concentration and support learning during child-chosen activities.
37. Teachers have good procedures to carry out observational assessments, which build a picture of how a child is progressing. These systematic assessments are used effectively to identify additional support for children who have special educational needs and to plan for future learning in group teaching. In mathematics, the evaluation of the assessments is not used sufficiently to address individual weaknesses in children's understanding.
38. The relatively new leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are satisfactory. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together as a team and provide good role models for children. Very good use is made of the expertise of some teaching assistants in specialist areas such as dance.

Personal, social and emotional development

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children play well together and show high levels of involvement in self-chosen activities
- Children are encouraged to select and use resources independently
- The reception classes do not tidy up well

Commentary

39. Achievement in personal, social and emotional development is good. This is a similar judgement to the last inspection. Many children enter school with limited confidence. Good induction procedures help them to settle quickly into their environment and to develop good, trusting relationships with adults and other children. The good organisation and consistent

classroom routines, reinforced by a visual timetable in the nursery, teach children to understand what they should do and provides them with the security they need to be adventurous in their learning. Children achieve well in this area because teachers have high expectations of independence. Children deepen their understanding of themselves as a member of a group or partnership when they work together, for example to produce a picture of Rapunzel, make a kite or play in the greengrocers. Children in the reception classes understand the expectation that the class will be tidy, but they do not put things away after use or tidy up until the bell signals the end of the session. Children sit and listen well during whole-class sessions. Teaching and learning are good and almost all children will meet the early learning goals by the end of reception and a good number will exceed them.

Communication, language and literacy

40. It is not possible to make a judgement about provision in this area of learning as not enough direct teaching of communication, language and literacy was seen during the inspection. However, based on the evidence collected during observations, and from talking to children and looking at samples of their work, judgements can be made about standards and achievement. By the time children join Year 1, standards in speaking and listening, spelling and handwriting are above those expected. Children develop confidence in talking about what they have found out and how they have made objects during child-initiated activities because there are very good opportunities to talk to an audience. Handwriting skills are taught regularly. Most children develop good hand control and present their writing neatly. Standards in reading and in the content of pupils' writing are about the same as those expected and children's achievement is satisfactory. During a writing session, talking partners were used well to help more-able children clarify their creative ideas by talking to a classmate before beginning to write. Teachers plan interesting activities to develop writing and phonic skills at different levels, to match the group's stage of development. Reading and writing sessions observed during the inspection were short and not always followed up by activities which reinforced and consolidated learning. By the time they join Year 1, most children will reach the goals expected and some will exceed them.

Mathematical development

Provision in mathematical development is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Planned mathematical activities cater well for children of varying abilities
- Insufficient time is spent in the direct teaching of mathematical skills
- Teaching assistants are used well to support group learning

Commentary

41. Children achieve satisfactorily in their mathematical development. Teachers cater well for differing levels of ability by planning interesting activities to teach the same mathematical concept at different levels. Teaching assistants use the resources well when they teach small groups so that, during direct teaching sessions, children achieve well. However, direct teaching sessions are too short and do not happen daily. Sometimes the impact of the good teaching is lost because it is not followed up by consolidation and reinforcement activities. Incidental opportunities for counting, addition and subtraction are used well during register time and during outside play. There are missed opportunities for adult interaction to consolidate calculating skills during child-initiated activities, shopping role play and tuck time so that children do not develop these skills as well as they could. In spite of this, teaching and learning are satisfactory. Standards are similar to those noted in the last inspection and most children will meet, and some will exceed, the expected goals by the time they join Year 1.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is good.

Main strengths

- The children learn how to think like scientists
- Children are creative in their use of recycled materials to make models
- The children use the computers with confidence and show good mouse control skills

Commentary

42. Children start school with good general knowledge. They achieve well so that they exceed the expectations for their age in this area. Many exceed these expectations in the scientific aspect. Curiosity in the living world is stimulated through planting seeds and studying life cycles. The children have the opportunity to observe the development of frogs and to see chicks hatching from incubated eggs. In carrying out experiments, children develop observation and prediction skills about what will happen to seeds planted in various conditions. They demonstrate good understanding of the conditions in which plants will grow. Children show good hand control skills when they use the computer mouse in drawing programs to record their ideas about dinosaurs and dragons. The good resources on the 'making table' stimulate children to be creative in using 'junk' materials to make carts, lorries and kites. They co-operate together in solving the problems of joining materials and make evaluative comments about each other's work. These activities provide good situations for children to improve their speaking skills in describing what they have done during the 'show and tell' session at the end of the activity period. Teaching and learning are good. Standards are higher than those reported at the last inspection. Almost all children will reach the expected goals and a good number will exceed them by the time they complete their reception year.

Physical development

Provision in physical development is good.

Main strengths

- Children achieve very well during dance lessons
- The outdoor area offers good opportunities for exploring body control skills such as balancing, climbing and tunnelling
- There is good provision for developing children's hand-eye coordination

Commentary

43. Children's achievement in physical development is good because there are good, planned opportunities, such as dance sessions and cutting and making activities, to develop their hand-eye co-ordination as well as their body control. The very good teaching of dance exercises children's bodies well and reinforces their understanding of how their body responds to exercise. 'Tuck time' demonstrates healthy eating, but children are not always aware of the purpose behind the provision of fruit. Children from both nursery and the reception classes learn well because they have good access to the outside area where they can use larger apparatus and develop good control of their movements. Physical activities make a good contribution to personal and social development because children learn to take turns, watch and appreciate others' efforts, and to be aware of the safety of others when using equipment. Children's finer muscle control is developed well because teachers provide good opportunities to handle small apparatus such as interlocking shapes, jigsaws, pencils, crayons, paint brushes, scissors and small containers. Teaching and learning are good overall. Standards are higher than those noted at the last inspection, and almost all

children will reach the expected goals for their age and a good number will exceed them by the end of reception.

Creative development

Provision in creative development is good.

Main strengths

- There are good opportunities for developing imaginative play
- Children express their ideas through a range of materials and suitable tools
- Children cooperate well together to produce a piece of art work

Commentary

44. Achievement in creative development is good. Children enjoy developing their creativity through imaginative play and listening to well-told stories. In the nursery, children express themselves through role play, dressing up, painting and construction. They try to create their own musical instruments through the use of beans and recyclable materials. In the reception classes, children use imagination in art and design to create patterns and pictures and in the making of props, such as space machines, to support their play. They engage in detailed role play, often adopting a voice to suit their character. They choose to collaborate to produce co-operative pieces of art work. For example, a boy and girl worked together on a picture of their favourite story, with one drawing the figures with a fine brush and the other painting a background. Children experiment with percussion instruments to produce sounds which represent the weather, or traffic noise to accompany their constructed vehicles. Teaching and learning are good and standards are higher than those reported in the last inspection. Almost all children will meet the goals expected and a good number will exceed them by the time they join Year 1.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1

ENGLISH

Provision in English is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above average in speaking and listening and above average in reading
- Standards in writing are not as good as those in reading, speaking and listening
- Drama and role play are used effectively to develop skills in both speaking and writing
- Very good leadership and management are firmly focused on raising standards

Commentary

45. Results of the 2004 Year 2 national tests were above average in reading when compared with all schools and schools in similar circumstances. Results in writing, however, were just below average when compared with both groups of schools, because not enough pupils reached the higher levels in the test. In the current Year 2, standards of speaking and listening are well above average and standards in reading are above average. Standards in writing have improved and are now average. Overall, pupils' achievement in English is good.
46. Pupils' achievement in speaking and listening is very good because teachers plan a wide range of opportunities so that pupils listen carefully and speak for a purpose. Puppets, role play and drama are used effectively to help lower attaining pupils to rehearse their ideas for writing. Average attainers use a wide range of vocabulary and give detailed explanations. In a Year 2 literacy lesson, higher attaining pupils discussed characters in a story and asked very thoughtful questions of the two in the 'hot seats', who maintained their roles throughout. The quality of pupils' questions was praised by the local Member of Parliament on a recent visit to the school.
47. Pupils achieve well in reading because reading for pleasure is encouraged in a literary rich environment, and adult helpers, visits and visitors make a significant contribution to pupils' reading

enjoyment. Parents are given guidance on how to help their children at home and teaching assistants keep careful records of pupils' progress in guided reading groups. Pupils in a Year 1 literacy lesson could explain what research means, and most know how to use an index and contents page in non-fiction texts. Higher attaining pupils in Year 2 worked independently to select appropriate information for a poster about herbivores and carnivores.

48. Overall, pupils' achievement in writing is satisfactory, and improving. Very few work sheets are used so pupils of all abilities are given many opportunities to write independently. Pupils in Year 1 show a good grasp of letter sounds and use capital letters and full stops accurately. Higher attaining pupils use connecting words such as 'because' and 'but' to join sentences. By Year 2, lower attaining pupils make meaning clear in simple sentences. Average attainers write at length about events in their lives. Higher attaining pupils use new words imaginatively in stories. However, some average and higher attaining pupils pay too little attention to the spelling required to reach the higher targets when writing independently.
49. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Teachers plan lessons well and make good use of the computer linked to a large screen in their demonstrations and explanations, which stimulates pupils' interest. The best lessons link reading, spelling and writing into an experience from which children can write with confidence. When teachers break learning into small steps, pupils are challenged, concentrate hard and achieve well. Very good questioning promotes pupils' thinking and challenges the most able. Even though a high level of discussion takes place, if this goes on for too long, or boys dominate by calling out rather than putting their hands up, the pace of learning slows. As a result, not enough time is left for pupils to show what they have learnt.
50. Teaching assistants work very effectively, particularly with small groups, so lower attaining pupils, pupils with special educational needs and the few who have English as an additional language make good progress. Pupils in all classes have good attitudes to learning, take care with the presentation of their work and are given good opportunities to improve their handwriting. Most pupils write in joined script but, for some, incorrect pencil grip and poor posture impedes the fluency of their writing. Pupils use computers confidently to write and to practise literacy skills.
51. Leadership and management are very good. The school has made good use of performance data and monitoring of pupils' learning in lessons to implement strategies to raise standards in spelling and writing. Teachers' use of success ladders in their target setting is effective in showing older pupils what they need to do in order to improve. The school has made good improvement since the previous inspection. The achievement of higher attaining pupils has improved, and the range of strategies put in place to close the gap between standards of writing and the other areas of the curriculum are beginning to have an impact.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

52. Language and literacy are well used across the curriculum. Pupils are given opportunities to label drawings and diagrams and write extensively in other subjects such as science, history, geography and design and technology. Pupils have weekly spelling tests based on the most frequently used words, but the lists are not adapted to include key words linked to work being undertaken in other subjects. Computers are used well to research information and draft or word-process text. Drama and role play are used very well to reinforce pupils' understanding of social and moral issues. They also read the Bible and stories and poems from a wide range of cultures.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- By the end of Year 2, Standards are above average and pupils achieve well
- Mental and oral work is emphasised and supports pupils' achievement
- The quality of teaching is good overall with a number of very good features
- Teaching assistants support pupils who have special educational needs very well
- Good assessment and tracking of pupils' progress help teachers to plan appropriately

- Leadership and management is good but there is insufficient monitoring of standards of teaching
- Assessment is good but there is insufficient use of marking and pupil targets to help pupils to know what to do next to improve
- There are insufficient planned opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical skills in other subjects

Commentary

53. Results of the 2004 Year 2 national tests were above average both nationally and when compared with schools in similar circumstances. Despite a fall in the attainment levels of children when they start school, standards in Year 2 have been maintained successfully since the last inspection.
54. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those whose first language is not English, achieve well because of the good teaching and support they receive. By the end of Year 2, almost half of the pupils are working at a level above the national average. Improvement since the last inspection is good.
55. The quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 is good overall with a significant number of very good features. Lessons are well planned and begin with a short oral session during which teachers ensure that pupils learn mental strategies to help them calculate. This sharpens pupils' quick recall of number facts and gives them confidence when working out problems. In some classes the teacher and pupils have the benefit of a computer linked to a large screen. These are particularly successful in engaging pupils and encouraging all to participate fully, for example when pupils split numbers into tens and units or learn to add on ten. In all of the lessons seen, pupils knew what it was they were expected to learn because the teacher shared the intention with them very clearly at the beginning of the lesson. At the end of the lesson, the teacher returned to the learning intention and skilfully questioned pupils to assess their progress. Tasks are practical and very well matched to pupils' abilities ensuring that those with special educational needs make the same good progress as higher attaining pupils. The practical nature of the tasks makes lessons enjoyable and interesting so that pupils are enthusiastic and develop a good attitude to their work. For example, when learning about symmetry, lower attaining pupils explored it through painting, making patterns with peg boards and magnetic shapes, whilst higher attaining pupils plotted their symmetrical patterns on a grid. Twice weekly the teaching of mathematics is organised into ability sets. This arrangement is effective in ensuring that all pupils are appropriately challenged. In the best lessons, teachers make their expectations of behaviour very clear, no time is wasted, lessons have a good pace and, as a result, pupils achieve well. In a small minority of lessons, teachers allow the behaviour of a few to interrupt the flow of learning so that pupils do not get as much done as they should.
56. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The subject leader is new to the role but has a plan in place to improve mathematics further and a good knowledge of standards across the school. Although pupils' work and teachers' planning is sampled, procedures to monitor teaching and learning across the school are not rigorous enough. This issue is outstanding from the previous report but is partly the result of a change in the leadership of the subject. Through good assessment procedures, teachers track pupil progress regularly and this usefully informs the school about standards on a termly basis. Marking of pupils' work and the targets in their books are not used sufficiently to inform pupils of what they should do next to improve.

Mathematics across the curriculum

57. There is little evidence that pupils are given sufficient opportunity to apply and develop numeracy skills in other subjects. There are very few examples in pupils' science and

geography work of measuring or recording using graphs, charts or tables. In lessons teachers do make opportunities for counting, for example when working out numbers at registration, but there is no evidence that practising mathematical skills is planned systematically across the curriculum.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average and pupils achieve well
- Tasks in lessons are well matched to pupils' abilities
- The Scientific skills needed for investigations are very well taught
- Pupils enjoy their learning and lessons are exciting, but teachers' management of behaviour is sometimes not strong enough and this interferes with the pace of learning

Commentary

58. Teachers' 2004 assessments of pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 showed that standards were above average. Standards in the current Year 2 are just as good. All pupils, including higher attainers, those with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their first language, are achieving well because of the good teaching and support they receive. In Year 2, almost all pupils understand how to conduct a simple fair test because of the high emphasis the school now places upon pupils learning good investigative skills. This is an improvement since the last inspection when higher attaining pupils, in particular, were reported as not reaching their full potential and all pupils were not practising scientific skills sufficiently. A fall in the attainment of pupils when they join the school has meant that the staff have worked hard to maintain the above average standards reported in Year 2 at the time of the last inspection.
59. The quality of teaching is good overall. Lessons are well planned and clear learning intentions are identified so that pupils know what they are expected to learn. At the end of each lesson, teachers return to the learning intention and assess pupils' progress by giving them opportunities to explain what they have found out. In a well organised practical lesson to investigate which materials are waterproof, Year 1 pupils made good progress because the activities were well matched to their abilities and all were very well supported by the teacher and the assistants. Lower attaining pupils' vocabulary was extended by good questioning and discussion. Making wax resist pictures held their interest as well as illustrating the waterproof properties of the wax. Higher attaining pupils used hand lens to examine materials, after which they tested them. The teachers' good questioning skills helped pupils to explain their predictions about a wide variety of materials. Year 2 pupils successfully learned about how to conduct a fair test because the teacher established a set of rules with them when experimenting to see which materials dissolved and which did not. The very good organisation of the lesson gave all pupils the opportunity to practise the skills, and to record clearly and appropriately using the correct scientific vocabulary. As a result of good teaching, pupils are very enthusiastic and excited and work hard most of the time. Occasionally, however, some become over excited, call out and interrupt the lesson and some teachers are slow to manage this firmly. As a result, the pace of the learning is not as fast as it could be.
60. Leadership and management of the subject are good. Changes made to the curriculum have helped to raise standards, especially because more emphasis has been placed upon investigative skills. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Good links with other subjects are created. For example, this year the school's Verse and Arts week will feature the science based topic of 'Water'. There are very good assessment procedures in place. These are of a practical nature and follow each unit of work. They are carried out by

observing pupils and questioning them as they are working. Pupils have the opportunity to tell teachers exactly what they know, understand and can do. This helps teachers to plan effectively for further learning. However, marking does not tell pupils what they must do next to improve and there is insufficient monitoring of standards of teaching. Overall improvement since the last inspection is good.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

61. No overall judgement of provision in ICT is made because it was only possible to see one, short lesson. Inspection judgements are based upon work scrutiny, the cross-curricular use of ICT seen in classes and discussions with staff and pupils.
62. Standards in the work seen are satisfactory. There are two or three computers in each classroom and large screens linked to computers in Year 2 and a shared area. These are overcoming the problem of whole-class demonstrations of specific computer skills which, in the past, has limited pupils' rates of progress in some strands of ICT capability. The school has plans to increase the number of large screens in the school.
63. Pupils have greatest experience in communicating information using ICT. By the end of Year 2, most pupils demonstrate good mouse control. They use programs which combine text and images, change the font size and style of their writing and punctuate it correctly. They embolden text, use a Thesaurus and access information via the internet.
64. Appropriate skill levels in all strands of ICT are planned for in the good scheme of work. It has taken into account the increased skill level of pupils when they enter school by including accessing the internet and work on e-mails in the Year 2 programme of work.
65. The subject is well led and managed. Good support is given to colleagues in using the new large screens to their best advantage and in selecting software that will enhance learning across the curriculum. The co-ordinator reviews and trials software before purchase to ensure that it matches the pupils' learning needs. Teachers' subject expertise, planning and the scheme of work have all improved since the last inspection.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

66. ICT is being used well in other subjects. All literacy and numeracy plans include the use of ICT. Computers linked to large screens are used regularly in Year 2 for whole-class sessions to successfully engage pupils and enhance teaching across the breadth of the curriculum. For example, a mathematics lesson where pupils were making amounts of money to go into a purse fully engaged the pupils because they could physically move coins into the purses through the use of the large computer screen. Inspection evidence indicates that ICT is being used in the teaching of mathematics, science, literacy, geography, history and art. Pupils use programs that reinforce scientific learning such as during a lesson exploring the concept of dissolving. They practise spelling and write captions and sentences in literacy and use the internet for research in history. This represents a good improvement in the cross curricular use of ICT since the last inspection.

HUMANITIES

67. No lessons were seen in history and only one was seen in geography so it is not possible to make judgements about overall provision in these subjects, which were not a focus of the inspection. There is, however, every indication from pupils' work, teachers' planning and discussions with subject leaders that, by Year 2, standards are above those expected for pupils' ages. Since the last inspection, standards have improved in geography and have been maintained in history. Provision in religious education is not included here because it was inspected independently by the diocese and is the subject of a separate report.

68. In the very good **geography** lesson seen in Year 2, a market scene in New Delhi was recreated in the classroom to help pupils understand that India is an exciting and diverse country. Through a combination of music, food tasting, costume, dance and drama, the experience enabled pupils to describe their view of a place and way of life beyond their own. They used their literacy skills very well to write postcards home. This creative way of presenting geography stimulates pupils' interest and enthusiasm and, as a result, they achieve well. Examples of pupils' work retained from previous projects record their 'interviews' with 'residents' on the island of Struay. Role play has been used successfully to help them understand the problems of living on a small island.
69. Work seen in Years 1 and 2 shows that all pupils have a good knowledge of **history** for their age and are developing skills to help them to learn about the past. Links with literacy are very good with planned writing activities that include letters, diary entries and poems about Samuel Pepys, and accounts of the plague and the Great Fire of London. Work on display involves very good use of art, and photographs show that teachers prepared leading questions to promote enquiry. For example, Year 1 pupils compare and contrast homes now and in the past. Visits and visitors enrich pupils' understanding of life in the past. After a visit to Hampton Court, Year 2 pupils dressed up in appropriate costume and recreated a Tudor banquet. They looked carefully at reproductions of portraits to write accurate descriptions of Henry VIII's appearance, and higher attaining pupils wrote extensively about the reasons why he had six wives. The good links made with other subjects are an effective vehicle for extending pupils' learning.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

70. Three lessons were seen in physical education and one lesson in art. No lessons were seen in design and technology or music. Because the evidence is limited, it is only possible to make a judgement about provision in physical education. However, the school asked that art and design should be a focus for the inspection and, because a good selection of pupils' work was available, it is possible to make judgements about the quality of the curriculum and standards in this subject. The overall picture is that provision for physical education is good, standards of work in art and design are excellent and it is a strength of the school, and standards in design and technology are above average. It is not possible to make a judgement about standards in music.
71. **Art** is very well taught in cross-curricular contexts and as a specific subject. This is in keeping with the school's emphasis upon creativity within the curriculum. There is ample evidence of the excellent quality of the work produced by pupils in the displays which enhance the school environment. Themed artwork abounds around the school bringing to life other areas of the curriculum such as the Great Fire of London, Africa Week, and seasonal collage illustrating "Mine is the sunlight".
72. Work on display is of the highest quality, showing very good observational and hand control skills, which are well above expectations for this age group. The very active Art Club for Year 2 pupils produces, during the course of a lunch time, outstanding charcoal drawings which very effectively demonstrate how the medium can be used to show light and dark. Flower tiles produced by Year 1 have been executed with extreme care and pride, but each is different, reflecting the subject's philosophy of valuing individuality.
73. Pupils have experience of a wide range of materials and techniques such as clay, print, three dimensional construction, fabrics, computers and collage. Starting from experimentation and exploration of the materials' properties, pupils gradually build their knowledge of ways in which the material can be used for effect. The very good guidelines produced by the co-ordinator outline the progression of skill development from nursery to Year 2 with each material and technique.

74. The school has an artist in residence who, during weekly visits, has worked with groups of pupils to practise techniques such as combining water colours with wax resist to produce depth and texture to observational drawings. The resulting work from pupils across the ability range is excellent. Pupils' observational paintings of blossom and cabbages were of high quality, demonstrating a variety of techniques and very good use of colour.
75. Leadership and management of the subject are very good. The subject leader has an infectious enthusiasm for the subject. Through her own artistic skill and personal knowledge of artists and their style, she engenders a confidence in staff and pupils that results in everyone achieving well. The standard of work seen indicates that there has been further improvement since the previous inspection.
76. The study of pupils' work and discussions with staff indicate that, by Year 2, standards in **design and technology** are above average. Year 2 stick puppets are very good evidence that pupils produce good quality work because they learn to design, make and evaluate their products successfully. Particular emphasis is placed upon pupils' ability to evaluate and amend their designs and this is an improvement since the last inspection. Good use is made of their literacy skills when writing planning notes for materials and improvements. Design and technology tasks are integrated into and across the curriculum so that pupils build their skills from year to year through a variety of subjects. For example, there are good links with art and sewing club as pupils design felt hearts and make masks, wall hangings and coil pots during Africa Week. A Year 2 trip to a pizza restaurant to make their own pizzas enriches their learning through food technology. The subject is well resourced and organised and effectively managed.
77. Photographs and discussion with pupils and staff indicate that pupils enjoy a variety of experiences in **music**. Through the study of other cultures they have explored different traditional instruments, for example playing a wide selection of drums during Africa Week. Good musical links are created with geography, design and technology and dance through which the school emphasises its belief in providing a creative curriculum. Opportunities for Year 2 pupils are enriched by a club where they learn to play the recorder. All pupils attend regular weekly singing practice and, as a result, they sing tunefully and with enthusiasm in assemblies. A published scheme is used to teach specific musical skills. During the inspection, part of a lesson was observed during which pupils successfully learned to use percussion instruments to create mood and effect. Recorded music is used to good effect around the school, creating a calm and inviting atmosphere.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average and pupils are keen to improve their skills
- Pupils achieve well because of very good organisation and challenging activities
- Cramped outdoor space means that lessons focus on skills rather than a whole game

Commentary

78. Pupils of all abilities achieve well and, by the end of Year 2, reach standards that are above those expected for their age. There is an appropriate range of gymnastics, dance and games activities during the year. However, since the previous inspection, the school no longer has access to a swimming pool and has chosen not to teach swimming.
79. Pupils in Year 1 have good control and co-ordination as they listen to different musical sounds for stop, start and change directions. Year 2 pupils use over-arm throwing techniques with bean bags and show appropriate hand and eye co-ordination as they bounce balls around cones. They achieve well because they are taught skills and

encouraged to practise them, whilst teachers increase challenge by varying the task. Pupils concentrate hard and work enthusiastically. They show good social development as they take turns to use equipment and return apparatus to an appropriate place for the next group to use. Teachers and teaching assistants give very well targeted support that enables pupils with special educational needs to play a full part in lessons.

80. In the three lessons observed, the quality of teaching was at least good, with some that was excellent. Teachers have good strategies to ensure that lessons have calm beginnings and endings. Well organised warm-up activities set a fast pace, and clear instructions mean that pupils know what to do. They explain why their pulse rate increases with exercise and how cooling down helps to reduce it. In an excellent dance lesson, skills were taught by outstanding example. As a result, the variety of movements and rapid pace of learning exceeded what would normally be expected for children of this age. Pupils are encouraged to observe each other but are not asked to evaluate each other's work.
81. Resources and accommodation for gymnastics and small games activities are good. Older pupils can take national awards in a gymnastics club run by a visiting specialist. As at the time of the previous inspection, limited outdoor space restricts opportunities for athletics and whole-game practice. At present the subject has a temporary leader in place to manage provision in the subject. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory overall.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

82. No lessons were seen in this subject and there was no past work completed by the pupils that could be used to evaluate the standards achieved. As a result, it is not possible to make judgements about pupils' achievement or the quality of teaching and learning. The curriculum section of this report evaluates provision for pupils' personal, social and health education as good.

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	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)	2
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
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	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
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).