

INSPECTION REPORT

ST JOSEPH'S RC VA PRIMARY SCHOOL

Hedworth, Jarrow

LEA area: South Tyneside

Unique reference number: 108724

Headteacher: Mrs G M Egdell

Lead inspector: Mrs J Morley

Dates of inspection: 24th - 26th January 2005

Inspection number: 267838

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: 179
School address: St Joseph's Way
Hedworth
Jarrow
South Tyneside
Postcode: NE32 4PJ
Telephone number: (0191) 536 4311
Fax number: (0191) 537 1641
Appropriate authority: The governing body
Name of chair of Mrs A Gibson
governors:
Date of previous 8th - 11th March 1999
inspection:

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- The school caters for pupils aged four to 11 and there are currently 179 boys and girls on roll.
- Almost all pupils are of white British heritage. A tiny minority is white and from outside Britain.
- There are no pupils for whom English is an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is broadly average at 17 per cent. Most pupils' special educational needs are moderate learning difficulties. A small proportion have more challenging needs and these relate to severe learning difficulty, profound and multiple learning difficulty and visual impairment.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is broadly average at 15 per cent.
- Social and economic factors are broadly average when compared with the national picture.
- Turnover of pupils and staff is low.
- Attainment on entry to the school is broadly at the level expected nationally in most years for children starting in the Reception Year. There is some variation from year to year and the present year group started with attainment a little below the level expected.
- The school is involved in the Excellence in Cities Action Zone initiative.
- It holds the following awards:
 - School Achievement Award (2002); and
 - Basic Skills Quality Mark (2000 and 2004)

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
25470	J Morley	Lead inspector	English Art and design Design and technology
9333	K Schofield	Lay inspector	
22881	G Halliday	Team inspector	Mathematics Physical education
29188	G Ulyatt	Team inspector	Geography History Areas of learning in the Foundation Stage
20038	G B Watson	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Music Special educational needs

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school with many very good features. Key amongst these are its strong Christian ethos and the collective enthusiasm of all who work in the school for embracing change in order to bring about improvement. The quality of teaching is consistently good, enabling pupils of all capabilities to achieve well. Standards in English and mathematics in the present Year 6 exceed those expected nationally. Leadership and management by the headteacher are very good and support from other senior managers is good; all three lead by example. Relationships within school are very good. Pupils are delightfully well mannered, confident and mature. Value for money provided by the school is good.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- English and mathematics standards are above the level expected nationally in Year 6.
- All pupils achieve well because they are consistently well taught and are very well cared for.
- The headteacher leads very well. She is a very good role model for all staff and pupils.
- Pupils' behaviour is impeccable and their work ethic and punctuality for school are very good.
- Assessment is underdeveloped in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- Occasionally, activities are insufficiently open-ended to allow the most capable pupils to make the best progress.
- There is no secure outside area in which the Reception class curriculum can be fully developed.
- Opportunities on offer outside the school day, such as clubs, are good.

Improvement since the school was last inspected in March 1999 is very good. The school has dealt comprehensively with all five key issues identified for improvement: standards in science, teaching quality in some classes, curriculum plans and the delegation of responsibility and resources in a wide range of areas. Standards in English, mathematics and science have improved. Pupils' current information and communication technology (ICT) skills are markedly broader and more sophisticated than those described in the last report. In fact, there are no areas in which standards are weaker now than at the last inspection. Unsatisfactory teaching has been eliminated and the proportion that is good or better in the lessons observed has increased from 60 to 100 per cent. Pupils' behaviour has improved markedly, as has their work ethic. The headteacher's leadership has also been strengthened.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average.

Pupils' achievement is good. Pupils achieve well in the Reception Year with the result that, by the end of the year, the large majority are on course to reach the goals expected of children of this age in all six areas of learning. The same good progress continues through Years 1 and 2. Currently, reading, writing and mathematics standards are above national expectations overall in Year 2. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 continue to achieve well. Current standards in Year 6 reflect good progress for these pupils since 2001 when they attained

average standards in their end of Year 2 tests. Their current attainment is above the level expected nationally in both English and mathematics, because teaching is raising standards. Science standards are at the level expected nationally overall in Years 2 and 6; pupils' investigation skills meet expectations while their scientific knowledge exceeds them. ICT standards meet national expectations. Not enough evidence was gathered to make secure judgements on standards and achievement in other subjects.

Pupils' personal development is very good overall. Their spiritual, moral and social development is very good and their cultural development, good. This is seen in their excellent behaviour and very good attitudes. Attendance is good and punctuality is very good because pupils are keen to come to school and because the school is very effective in promoting attendance and parents play their part very well.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education, including the teaching, is good. Teachers foster relaxed yet respectful relationships and expect pupils to behave extremely well and to work hard. Pupils reward their teachers with exemplary behaviour and a strong work ethic. The work that teachers set for pupils is almost always well matched to pupils' differing capabilities although, on occasions, tasks are insufficiently 'open-ended' to create the potential for the most capable pupils to achieve as well as possible. Assessment is satisfactory overall and, in some areas – particularly in writing – assessment information has been used very successfully to trigger action and raise standards. However, clear assessment procedures are not yet established in several subjects of the curriculum and they also require some improvement in the Reception Year. The curriculum is satisfactory and the range of activities on offer outside the school day is good. As yet, there is no secure outdoor play area for reception children and this limits the range of activities available to the children. The partnerships with parents, other schools and the community are good and the care offered to pupils is very good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good overall. The headteacher leads by example and does so very well. She has earned respect and commitment from all who work with her and the two members of the senior management team ably support her. Teamwork amongst all adults who work in the school is strong. It is partly because of this corporate spirit that the school has made such strides since its last inspection. The school openly welcomes advice and support. For example, with the aid of a consultant acquired through Education Action Zone funding, the headteacher and staff have worked hard together to develop their excellent teaching and learning policy and to use it to improve the teaching quality. Clearly, this has been highly successful. Governance is satisfactory. Governors are becoming more knowledgeable about the strengths and weaknesses of the school but are not yet able to challenge on a range of issues. Governors fulfil all of their statutory duties.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

PARENTS THINK WELL OF THE SCHOOL AND THEIR VIEWS ARE FULLY JUSTIFIED. PUPILS ARE ALSO PLEASED WITH WHAT THE SCHOOL PROVIDES FOR THEM AND ARE HAPPY TO ATTEND.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Put assessment systems in place in those areas where they are lacking.
- Ensure that classroom tasks are always sufficiently 'open-ended' enough to allow the most capable pupils to make the best progress.
- Provide a safe and secure outside area in which the reception curriculum can be fully developed.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils' achievement is good overall. Pupils now in Year 6 are currently working at standards in English and mathematics that are above the nationally expected level. Standards in science and ICT are at the level expected nationally.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils of all capabilities achieve consistently well in English and mathematics.
- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics are now above the level expected nationally in Year 2 and Year 6.
- Occasionally, the most capable pupils' progress is restricted by activities that are insufficiently 'open-ended'.

Commentary

1. Standards in English, mathematics and science have improved since the last inspection. In addition, the repertoire of pupils' ICT skills has broadened significantly and standards now meet expectations in this area.
2. Children in the Reception class achieve well. In most years, they join the school with skills and aptitudes that meet those expected nationally, although the range in attainment is wide. However, the attainment of the current year group was slightly below average when they started. They are achieving well in relation to their earlier attainment and capabilities. The large majority are on course to meet the early learning goals in all six areas of learning by the end of the school year.
3. Currently, Year 2 pupils are working above the nationally expected standards in reading, writing and, mathematics and at the expected standard in science. This shows improvement since the tests of 2004 in reading and mathematics, when the results were close to the national average. It shows the maintenance of 2004 standards in writing and also those indicated by the teachers' assessments in science. In particular it shows a dramatic improvement in mathematics standards since the last inspection when standards were well below average. This improvement is the result of better teaching and intelligent use of assessment information.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.9 (15.9)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	15.6 (14.6)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	16.7 (18.0)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 29 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

4. Currently, Year 6 pupils are attaining above the nationally expected standards in English and mathematics and at the level expected in science. This shows an improvement in all three subjects since last year when standards in English and

mathematics were average and those in science were below average. As in Year 2, the improvement in the Year 6 results is because of effective teaching. Pupils' scientific knowledge and understanding are good. Their work in practical and investigative science is not as strong, although it is at the expected level. It is the relatively weaker standard of practical and investigative work that reduces the standards in science to the level expected overall.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.4 (28.6)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	27.0 (29.5)	27.0 (26.8)
science	28.2 (28.9)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 29 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

- In broad terms, all pupils' achievement is good because of the strides they make in English and mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs achieve as well as others. In particular, teachers, support staff and volunteers are good at supporting the less capable pupils, and those with special educational needs and helping them to attain the levels expected for their age in Years 2 and 6. This is clearly evident in all test results for 2004. The proportion of Year 2 pupils who fell short of Level 2 was smaller than the national average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Similarly, in Year 6, a smaller than average proportion of pupils fell short of Level 4 in English, mathematics and science. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels (Level 3 in Year 2 and Level 5 in Year 6) is fractionally less positive, generally falling a little short of the national average. This is because the tasks set for pupils are sometimes not open-ended enough for the most capable pupils to make the best possible progress.
- Achievement is satisfactory in science and standards meet national expectations. A main reason why pupils do not do quite as well as in English and mathematics is that investigation tasks are not sufficiently open-ended to allow them to make the best progress. ICT standards meet expectations and are rising; this is because pupils are achieving well now that the school has adequate resources. There was insufficient evidence on the remaining subjects of the curriculum to make secure judgements about standards and pupils' achievement.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' excellent behaviour is a significant strength of the school. Their attitudes, values and other personal qualities are very good. Attendance is above the national average. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is very good overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes have improved significantly since the last inspection and are now key contributory factors in their good achievement.
- Action to promote good attendance and to encourage prompt arrival is very good.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development reflects a strong Christian ethos.

Commentary

7. Comparing pupils' current behaviour with that described in the last inspection report underlines the great improvement that has taken place since 1999. Pupils' exemplary behaviour and strong work ethic greatly contribute to the quality of their learning and the standards they attain. In lessons, behaviour and attitudes to learning are consistently at least very good and often impeccable. Although there are two or three pupils who find it difficult to maintain good behaviour, teachers use their extensive skills to neutralise any potential outbreaks of unacceptable behaviour. No pupils have been excluded from the school in recent years.
8. In the pre-inspection meeting with inspectors, parents described pupils as excellent ambassadors for the school and praised their respectful behaviour in assemblies. Parents do not feel that bullying is an issue and no incidents of inappropriate behaviour were seen during the inspection. The school has high expectations of the relationships between pupils. On the rare occasion when these high expectations are not met, the school deals swiftly, firmly and sensitively with the matter. Parents are informed of the outcome. The school does not tolerate any form of bullying or harassment.
9. By carefully monitoring the causes of absence and creating improvement plans, the school has achieved a good level of attendance as shown in the table below. Pupils certainly enjoy coming to school and work hard to gain the annual, 100 per cent attendance award. Newsletters remind parents about the importance of good attendance. The great majority of parents follow the advice given about avoiding holidays during term time.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.3	School data	0.2
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.

10. Provision for spiritual development is very good. During the inspection, pupils in a whole school assembly prepared an impressive singing performance in readiness for Mass at the parish church. Opportunities are promoted for Christian reflection around the school through observation of focal points, such as a crucifix or a statue of Our Lady. Pupils learn about the wonders of the natural world and human achievement in many subjects and areas of the curriculum. Moral development is also very good. Moral principles are consistently promoted through all aspects of school work. Pupils have a strong sense of right and wrong and have a clear understanding of the impact that their behaviour has on others. This is possible because of the very good role models provided by all who work in the school - administrative staff, teachers, support and ancillary staff and volunteers. All speak with one voice.
11. The school provides very good opportunities to promote pupils' social development. For example, pupils with special educational needs are often paired with more capable pupils and they benefit from this opportunity. Easy collaboration between pupils is evident in every classroom, even when made up of pupils from different year groups. Pupils are increasingly given more responsibility as they progress through the school. For example, older pupils act as mentors for children in the Reception class and write simple poems about them to show how well they know and understand them. Reception children are thrilled! Pupils' achievements are recorded in the 'Gold Book',

after which they are celebrated in a special assembly and often acknowledged with spontaneous applause. Cultural development is good. Pupils are actively involved in their own culture, particularly with special events in the Christian calendar. They learn to appreciate the traditions of a variety of other cultures and faiths, for example the school has recently invited a Sikh and a Jew to visit the school. In addition, the school celebrates festivals from other cultures, such as Japanese Boys' Day, Diwali and Chinese New Year. These events help pupils to be outward looking and to appreciate the diversity of a modern multicultural and multi-faith society.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The overall quality of education is good. Teaching quality is consistently good. The curriculum is sound and there are good opportunities for learning outside the school day. Pupils are cared for very well and this creates a climate very supportive of learning and good achievement. The school's partnerships with parents, the community and other schools make a good contribution to pupils' education.

Teaching and learning

Pupils in all classes are consistently well taught and their learning is good. Assessment is satisfactory overall: good in some areas but underdeveloped in others.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All lessons seen were of at least good quality and teaching is thorough and systematic.
- Support to the least capable pupils and to those with special educational needs, is good.
- There are some occasions when the teaching is insufficiently challenging for the most capable pupils.
- The use of assessment to raise standards has been very successful in relation to pupils' writing.
- Assessment is less effective in subjects other than English and mathematics.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 27 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	7	20	0	0	0	0

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

12. The quality of teaching and learning has improved significantly since the last inspection. All unsatisfactory teaching has been eliminated and, in fact, all of the teaching seen was of good or better quality. At the last inspection this proportion was 60 per cent. This very good improvement is due largely to the school's sterling work on improving teaching quality, using expertise made possible by Education Action Zone funding. The headteacher has worked with staff to really 'unpick' the characteristics of good teaching and to monitor their implementation.
13. There are now no significant weaknesses in teaching quality, but several strengths. Good teaching is business like; teachers know what they want pupils to learn and share this information with them. Teaching and tasks are directed clearly at the

intended outcome and learning is checked methodically and thoroughly at the end of the lesson. This meticulous approach was clearly evident, for example, when Year 3 pupils learned three basic rules for making singular nouns plural. However, as is the case in some lessons, the exercise that followed was insufficiently 'open-ended' to challenge the most capable pupils fully.

14. Where teaching and learning are very good, this 'open-ended' dimension is present. For example, in a Year 4 and 5 history lesson on Bede, the teacher's questions provided the most capable pupils with real challenge and the task was genuinely 'open-ended', offering pupils the opportunity to really use their thinking skills to write in poetry or prose.
15. Support for the least able pupils, including those with special educational needs, is sensitively provided. They benefit from additional time with their teacher, classroom assistant or volunteer and are given confidence in their ability to achieve success. It is because of this additional support that the school is successful at helping a larger than average proportion of pupils to achieve the levels expected nationally, both in Year 2 and Year 6.
16. The school has plenty of assessment information about how well pupils are doing in English and mathematics and adequate information for science and ICT. Its focus on raising standards has recently been on writing. The way in which the school has matched teaching to pupils' differing needs in writing has been very successful. Assessment information has been very well analysed to identify the areas in which improvement might be made in writing and to provide a basis for effective action. In subjects other than English and mathematics, however, the use of assessment data is less effective and is underdeveloped. In science and ICT it is satisfactory and promotes standards at the level expected nationally. However, there is currently no assessment system capable of raising standards in other subjects.

The curriculum

The breadth of curricular opportunities is satisfactory. Opportunities for the enrichment of the curriculum are good. The accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good.
- Support for learning outside the school day is good because of the range and quality of activities on offer.
- There is no secure outdoor play area for reception children and this limits the development of the curriculum.

Commentary

17. The curriculum meets statutory requirements and suitable emphasis is given to English and mathematics. Issues from the last inspection have been effectively addressed. For instance, all policies and schemes are in place and resources are now satisfactory.

18. The strength of provision for pupils' personal, social and health education and citizenship makes a significant contribution to their very good attitudes to learning. This area of the curriculum is timetabled and linked, wherever possible, to religious education and other subjects. In science, for instance, coverage includes drugs awareness and sex education programmes. Good curriculum initiatives, for example through Excellence in Cities funding, have been used very effectively to raise pupils' esteem and confidence. Visitors contribute well to pupils' awareness of the responsibilities of citizenship.
19. Staff create good opportunities for pupils to take initiative in the wider life of the school. A recent development is the school council, which gives pupils a voice in its daily life. The next planned step for this is class councils. The system of 'houses' with captains and head boy and head girl is arranged to give a large number of older pupils experiences that develop their sense of social responsibility. Pupils' visits to the council offices and Mayor's Parlour give them an insight into local democracy.
20. Good care is taken to ensure that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum. This is reflected in the school's management of the curriculum in mixed-age classes to avoid repetition of content and to present challenge for all pupils. However, the Year 5 pupils in the Years 4 and 5 class do not have the same opportunity to benefit from musical instrumental tuition as those in the Years 5 and 6 class.
21. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from work that matches their needs in all areas of the curriculum. They use computer programs to support number and spelling work. This enables them to make good progress over time, in these areas. They also benefit from their use of the computer based individual learning system in mathematics.
22. The deputy headteacher has undertaken training in the assessment and identification of pupils who are gifted and talented. The provision for these pupils is a priority of the school improvement plan, which includes training for all teachers. At present, not all activities challenge the most capable pupils sufficiently in their day-by-day lessons.
23. The school prepares pupils well for later stages of education. The good progress they make in literacy and numeracy gives them a good start for each new class each year. Lessons taken by high school teachers give Year 6 pupils an early start with new learning in science, mathematics and ICT.
24. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities, including sport, dance and music, all of which are well attended. Good use is made of professional coaches. Teams regularly represent the school in sports competitions. Pupils gain valuable experiences from a wide number of visits and visitors to promote the arts and other activities. For instance, they have visited a local exhibition of Lowry's paintings and benefited from the work of an artist-in-residence. Older pupils learn about Shakespeare's plays from professional actors. Visits linked to the curriculum, such as to Bede's World and Eden Camp, make learning more meaningful. All pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 have good opportunities to experience outdoor and adventurous activities at a residential centre in the Lake District. In addition, all pupils have an introduction to conversational French at some point in their journey through school.
25. As yet, there is no secure outdoor play area for reception children. It has not been a priority for spending because other areas, particularly indoor furniture and resources

for Reception, ICT, mathematics and science, have taken precedence. This limits the development of the outdoor curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

All aspects of pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are very good. Pupils receive good advice and support and the school takes good account of their views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are very good procedures for ensuring that pupils work in a healthy and safe environment.
- Pupils have a good and trusting relationship with one or more adults in the school.
- The school is good at seeking, valuing and acting on pupils' views.

Commentary

26. The school has very good procedures to provide a safe environment and for the supervision and safety of pupils in school and during visits elsewhere. Pupils are aware of the need to be responsible for their own safety and for safe practices within the school community. Premises are monitored on a regular basis by staff, a governor and, on some occasions, a specialist from the local education authority. Curriculum plans include attention to health and safety. The school is working towards the Healthy Schools Award and pupils are aware of the need for healthy eating. The school is fortunate to have an award-winning cook and runner up nationally in the School Cook of the Year competition. Not surprisingly then, the food is of very high quality indeed. The school has sound arrangements for child protection. The written policy is based on locally agreed procedures.
27. Pupils of all ages know to whom they can turn if they need help, advice or support. Staff respond quickly and willingly. The strong relationships throughout the school and the care and support given by all adults, enable pupils to feel happy and secure. Pupils in the oldest class each have a partnership with a Reception class child. This good procedure helps the youngest children to settle into school life with confidence and also provides an opportunity for the older pupils' personal development. Parents are pleased that their children look forward to school.
28. Pupils know that their views matter and that the school will try to act upon what they say. There is a school council comprising of the house captains from each of the eight houses. House captains take on the responsibility of collecting the views and ideas from pupils in all classes. The house captain changes each term so that each pupil in the oldest class will have been captain at least once during his or her final year. The school also has a head boy and head girl and these also change termly and are chosen by the staff. They are expected to set a particularly good example. Pupils' suggestions through the school council have resulted in a safe playground area being designated for football. The latest meeting was concerned with avoiding bullying. The minutes of this meeting confirm that pupils have some mature and responsible ideas. A senior member of staff described the pupils as 'confident but not cheeky', and inspectors agree.
29. The support and guidance for pupils who have special educational needs are satisfactory. Teachers and support staff know the pupils well and show genuine

concern for their welfare. Much of the work they do has been planned to match the individual pupils' targets. These targets are regularly reviewed and teachers assess pupils' progress towards them. Teachers and support staff use ICT satisfactorily to support pupils with specific learning difficulties. Special equipment has been provided to help alleviate pain and discomfort to enable a child with physical disabilities to take a full part in school life.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents, the community and with other schools and colleges are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A large group of parents, grandparents and other adults help regularly in school.
- The school provides parents with good information to help their child learn.

Commentary

30. The strong partnership between the school and parents is evident through the quality of their relationship. Parents are provided with good information and they, in turn, contribute well to their children's learning. The school sends a good amount of information to parents and parents can contact the school by e-mail if they wish. The school always endeavours to find innovative ways to work with parents. For example, to support learning at home, the school has ordered revision books to help the pupils that take the National Curriculum tests in Year 2 and Year 6. Parents of pupils who have given their teacher concerns are involved at an early stage. Those parents of pupils with statements of special educational need are invited to review meetings, although there is little evidence that they are involved when the school sets targets to meet the needs of their child.
31. Parents are invited to school assemblies when their child is involved. In addition, a significant number of parents and helpers come into school on a regular basis, working voluntarily in classes. One dedicated helper, for example, works for four days each week. She arrives early in the morning, helping all day either in the kitchen or the classroom and even takes work home to prepare for the next day. A grandparent helps by using her computer skills in the computer suite as well as assisting with many other tasks, such as making costumes for school productions. A small group of parents have undertaken relevant training and now help pupils to make progress in reading. Another parent comes in each week to manage the school bank. Parents of Years 4 and 5 pupils were invited to (and did) submit *Willow Pattern* plate designs at the time when their sons and daughters were also learning about them. It was delightful to see both on display.
32. Links with the parish church are very strong with regular visits by pupils to participate in school services and, on special occasions, to sing at public Masses. Agencies, such as the police and fire fighters regularly visit school. The list of visitors to the school and visits made by pupils is quite extensive. Involvement with the local community starts with reception children who have, for instance, visited South Tyneside District Hospital. The school has organised Christmas hampers for the elderly and has also benefited from its links with sporting organisations, such as Sunderland Football Club.

33. The school regularly accepts teacher-training undergraduates and other students. They benefit from their learning experience, as well as making a valuable contribution to support in the classroom. Many students from the local college of further education were in school during the inspection. They integrated into the classroom environment very well, especially by helping pupils when they worked together in small groups.
34. There is good provision for the induction of children into the Reception class. The caring and committed staff work as a good team to make sure children settle quickly. Reception staff visit each nursery; hence children already know their new teachers before coming to school.
35. There is sound provision for transferring pupils to secondary education. Teachers from the comprehensive school, including the one for special educational needs, visit the primary school. The transfer arrangements cater for the full breadth of abilities. For example, three to four pupils go to the summer school for gifted and talented pupils held at one of the comprehensive schools. Some of the visiting teachers from St Joseph's Comprehensive School teach sample lessons, such as science or mathematics, to Year 6. The secondary school has specialist ICT status, so the primary school receives extensive support for this subject, for example, through its technician.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good overall. Leadership and management by the headteacher are very good and the senior managers support her well. The governance of the school is sound.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very good improvements since the previous inspection have been sensitively and strategically managed.
- The value that the headteacher places on the contributions of her colleagues and governors is key to the very strong team spirit in the school.
- The headteacher has made very good use of advice and support from a range of external agencies.

Commentary

36. Governors articulate the strengths of the school, referring particularly to the ethos and the all round education that the school offers. Key performance and assessment information is relayed to them by the headteacher. Very few were governors at the time of the last inspection and those who were have a limited understanding of the key issues and how they have been dealt with. Nevertheless they are supportive of the school and the chairperson is a regular visitor. The parish priest, who is a governor, leads Mass regularly. Governors have a vision of the kind of school they want St Joseph's to be and feel confident that the headteacher leads in that vein. They challenge and question over issues with which they feel comfortable. For example, there was a healthy discussion about the reduction in pupil numbers, leading to a decision that single age classes could no longer be sustained. The governing body fulfils all of its statutory duties.

37. Following the previous inspection, there were several significant issues to address and, additionally, the headteacher was aware of the need to improve the ethos of the school, including behaviour. Since then, there has been a strategic approach to the improvement of the building and resources and renewal of the team ethos throughout school. The latter has been carried out with sensitivity and consideration of the needs of individuals and has resulted in a very effective team. Staff trust each other and are open to colleagues' advice and guidance. This strong ethos and team spirit includes everyone: administrative, midday, teaching and support staff as well as those who help on a voluntary basis.
38. Money has been wisely spent and the school has done all in its power to access funding from a range of sources. The school has not overspent; the negative carry forward in the table below is affected by an outstanding payment from an insurance claim.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	533,966	Balance from previous year	8,000
Total expenditure	544,673	Balance carried forward to the next year	-2,707
Expenditure per pupil	3,060		

39. There is a very well structured plan for the monitoring of pupils' work, planning and teaching. This is in the form of a rolling programme that is closely aligned to the priorities of the school improvement plan. Under these arrangements, subjects are assigned different priority levels and the budget share is apportioned accordingly. The records of monitoring that coordinators have undertaken show that they carry out their responsibilities with rigour and make valid, developmental comments that are shared with the teachers concerned.
40. The school has made the most of its inclusion in the Education Action Zone and, more recently, in the Excellence in Cities initiative. It is to the credit of the headteacher, her spirit of openness and determination to secure improvement for her staff and pupils, that she sees the potential in these and other associations. She speaks very highly of the local education authority's scheme under which she meets with all agents of the authority who have had any contact with the school in the preceding year. This gives her vital feedback at the time of the meeting and in the written summary report that follows.
41. The management of special educational needs is satisfactory overall. The coordinator keeps all documents relating to individuals in an accessible form so that essential, up-to-date information can be retrieved easily. She uses the services of the local education authority effectively and implements specialist advice to improve provision for specific pupils. The co-ordinator has held the post for two years and came to it without any formal coordinator's training; she has had none since. The new appointment of a special educational needs governor presents a good opportunity for some professional development for both.
42. The Foundation Stage is well led and managed, as are the key curriculum areas of English, mathematics and ICT. Leadership and management of music are unsatisfactory because some staff do not have sufficient expertise. Leadership in

other areas is satisfactory overall because, although an extensive monitoring timetable is in place, assessment is currently too subjective and not based firmly enough on clear criteria. As a result, co-ordinators are unable to precisely pinpoint the areas in which improvement and action are most required.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Children enter the Reception class with levels of attainment that are broadly at the level expected nationally for their age, although the range of ability is extensive. The majority benefit from nursery education in a variety of settings before coming to school. Children achieve well and the vast majority are likely to reach the early learning goals in all six areas of learning by the end of the Reception Year. Children who have special educational needs are well supported. Teaching is consistently good and staff know children well. They assess children, but procedures are too time consuming and do not give a clear overview of gaps in learning. Focused teaching activities are well planned but opportunities for self-directed play are less well developed and this impacts on aspects of children's independence. Resources to support learning have improved since the last inspection. Children have daily access to two spacious rooms. They also have use of part of the parish grounds and the hall when riding wheeled equipment. The outdoor curriculum is limited, however, because there is no secure outside area.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children play and learn together well because adults are very good, caring role models.
- Opportunities for independence in learning are not planned well enough.
- Behaviour is very good and children are confident and relaxed.

Commentary

43. Teaching is good because the promotion of children's personal, social and emotional development permeates all other areas and therefore children achieve well. By the end of the Reception Year almost all are likely to reach the early learning goals. Because all adults adopt a clear and consistent approach in all they do, children feel safe and secure. Children are valued in school and show good levels of confidence. They enjoy their work and are proud of what they do, eagerly showing adults their pictures, writing and models. Because teaching is good, children show good levels of concentration, even when learning in a large group. They share equipment and take turns, even when not closely supervised by adults. However, there are too few planned opportunities for them to become responsible for their own learning. Some play activities do not give enough scope for children to explore their own ideas and show initiative and the lack of a secure outdoor area is a factor in this.
44. Adults place strong emphasis on social skills. Children's behaviour is very good because adults explain the boundaries very clearly. Children's spiritual development is good because they have a short period of time set aside each day for quiet reflection and prayer. They attend a short assembly with infant pupils and learn to become part of the larger school community. Teachers plan small group discussions with children to help them express their emotions and ideas. Hence, children are aware of the feelings of others.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make good progress in speaking and listening skills.
- Adults place strong emphasis on early reading skills.
- Writing activities are challenging and purposeful.

Commentary

45. Teaching is good and children learn and achieve well as a result. The vast majority are likely to reach the early learning goals by the end of the Reception Year. Children have good opportunities to develop speaking and listening skills and teachers use storybooks to full advantage. Children hear the same story many times in different situations and this helps them to learn new vocabulary. For example, they clearly know the names of all the food the *hungry caterpillar* eats in the story, even though many of the items eaten are strange to them.
46. Teachers demonstrate how to re-enact stories using props, helping children to speak clearly. They draw attention to letter sounds and this has resulted in several children using sounds to help with their reading and writing. One child wrote 'I wet t poc' (I went to the park). More capable children know that they have to write a capital letter at the beginning of a sentence and a full stop at the end. Writing has a purpose for children. They are helped to hold their pencils properly and to form letters correctly. They write in role-play by making out hospital appointments on the computer and printing them off. Children handle books well and choose stories they enjoy. Parents are encouraged to help out with reading at home and most children can read simple words by sight and attempt to read new words using letters they know to help them. They look at the pictures to help them guess what is happening in the story.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good emphasis on mathematics helps children become aware of mathematics all around them.
- Children achieve well in their understanding of number.

Commentary

47. Teaching is good and children learn and achieve well. The large majority are likely to be at the expected level by the end of the Reception Year. Adults plan sessions well to make mathematics interesting. They use mathematical language well with children, by referring to objects by size or by discussing the position of toys. They talk about symmetry when showing children how to make a picture of their own face. In this way children learn that mathematics is part of everyday life. When dancing in the hall, they sing rhymes about ever decreasing numbers of frogs. They use the interactive

whiteboard to identify two-dimensional shapes and manage to sort them by the number of sides and corners they have.

48. Groups of children are taken outside, wearing *shape hats*, to look for shapes around the school. They take photographs of those they like; a particular favourite is a rectangular door with small square panes of glass. Each morning children count up to the date number and most manage beyond 20. Numbers are clearly displayed to support learning. Children's workbooks show they are learning to match objects to the correct number and most write numbers clearly. More capable children are beginning to calculate simple problems such as 3+4.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have regular opportunities to develop good co-ordination skills.

Commentary

49. Teaching is good. Standards are at the expected level, with almost all children on course to reach the early learning goals and children achieve well. Children have good use of the school facilities and teaching sessions are well planned. In the hall, children run vigorously and become aware of their space and the space of others. In a lesson seen, children pretended to be frogs and improved their jumping skills. They eagerly demonstrated for others and thoroughly enjoyed the physical activity. They ride a range of wheeled apparatus in the nearby hall or outside in the parish grounds. Here they learn to push, pull and control vehicles. There are missed opportunities for regular and spontaneous physical activities because there is no secure outdoor area in which children can play. Children's fine finger skills and eye-to-hand coordination are developing well. They learn to manipulate objects, such as pasta when making models. They learn to use paintbrushes and cut round drawings accurately. They have daily opportunities to use felt tipped pens and most children control pencils with accuracy. Children enjoy their snack of fresh fruit and milk each day. They know the importance of warming muscles before exercise. During physical activity they talk about the increased heartbeat, the fast breathing and pink cheeks. They try to find their pulse to feel the increased speed.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD AND CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development was sampled. Insufficient evidence was gathered to make a secure judgement on the overall quality of provision in these two areas of learning.

50. In **knowledge and understanding of the world** children enjoy their activities. However, provision outdoors is limited. Children undertake activities such as

examining their faces in a mirror and make portraits using collage. They learn about growth through photographic displays of how they looked as babies. They find out about the senses and identify ears and noses on animals. They visit a local hospital to find out about the jobs people do. They learn about the recent past when visiting Beamish Museum. Children take part in celebrations as they occur during the year. They played a major role in the Nativity play at Christmas time.

51. In **creative development** children are encouraged to play in role in the role-play hospital where they dress up and pretend. They learn to paint and mix colours and taste cooked pasta. They enjoy singing songs and rhymes. The sessions are planned well but there are too few activities in this area for children to choose for themselves. Hence, opportunities for them to extend their creativity are sometimes missed.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attainment is above national expectations in Years 2 and 6.
- All pupils, regardless of ability, achieve well because teaching and learning are good.
- The school's concentrated efforts have led to much improved writing standards.

Commentary

52. Standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are currently above the level expected nationally. In both years this is an improvement since the last inspection. For Year 2 pupils it represents good achievement and good progress from broadly average attainment at the start of Year 1. For the pupils currently in Year 6 it also represents good achievement and attainment in relation to the standards they reached at the end of Year 2 when their test results had been broadly in line with the national averages.
53. Expectations of pupils' listening skills are very high and pupils reward their teachers with exemplary behaviour and concentration. Neither pupils nor teachers speak when someone else is speaking; both listen courteously. Pupils are encouraged to use adventurous vocabulary by looking carefully at that used in a range of texts. Their technical vocabulary develops well and supports good progress in all subjects.
54. Reading skills improve steadily as pupils progress through the school. Pupils take books home regularly and the contribution parents make to their child's reading skills is considerable; the vast majority of parents listen to their child read on a regular

basis. Consistent use of home-school reading diaries enables an up-to-date record to be maintained. Teachers make intelligent use of this by systematically ensuring that those who receive minimal support from home are given extra help in school. This is a good example of the school's commitment to equality of opportunity. Pupils' comprehension skills develop at a good rate in line with their ability to read the print.

55. Writing skills have been the focus of attention by the school for the past 18 months. All staff have agreed common practices and all offer pupils plentiful and varied opportunities to write. As a result, writing standards have improved significantly and are now above the level expected nationally, both in Year 2 and in Year 6.
56. Literacy lessons are taught consistently well. Some lack the spark to really enthuse pupils, but all have clear objectives that are actively pursued by teachers and pupils as the lesson progresses. The achievement of these objectives is methodically checked at the end. Lessons such as these ensure that pupils learn new skills well enough to be able to use them in other subjects of the curriculum.
57. Leadership and management of the subject are good, as demonstrated by the striking improvement in writing standards. In addition, success comes because all who work in the school pull so clearly in the same direction with a sharp focus on doing their best for the pupils.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

58. Pupils' reading skills allow them ready access to texts in a range of subjects across the curriculum. They have ample opportunities to write at length and the skills they learn in literacy lessons support them very well in all other subjects. By the same token, the writing that pupils do in science, history and geography helps them to consolidate these skills. Software is used intelligently to enable pupils to practise and consolidate newly taught literacy skills.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well because of good teaching and learning.
- There is a strong focus on number work.
- There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to investigate and learn independently of an adult or to use and apply mathematics in everyday situations.
- Leadership and management are good.
- Pupils are not always clear enough about what they have to do to improve.

Commentary

59. Standards are above the level expected nationally in both Year 2 and Year 6. The school does well for its pupils, with all groups making good progress and achieving well. Teachers are managing the move to mixed year group teaching well. Since the last inspection, staff have worked hard and successfully to raise standards. The proportion of pupils attaining the expected levels has risen steadily as the quality of

teaching has improved. As a result, few pupils fail to reach the standards expected for their age and a significant number reach higher standards.

60. The strong and appropriate focus on numeracy skills has improved pupils' knowledge and handling of number. Teachers place suitable emphasis on most areas of the subject such as shape, space and measures and handling data. However, there are few examples of pupils using and applying mathematics in everyday situations. Teachers do not give pupils enough opportunities to develop their own strategies or to make general statements of their own, based on evidence they have produced themselves. For instance, although pupils in Years 5 and 6 know how to interpret data, they do not collect their own data in order to test a hypothesis. This lack of open-ended and independent learning opportunities means that there are some missed opportunities to challenge the most capable pupils.
61. Teaching and learning are good overall. Lessons are interesting and flow well because teachers are secure in their knowledge of mathematics. Their insistence on high standards of behaviour enables all pupils to take a full part in discussions and work productively. The lesson in which the most effective teaching and learning were seen was in the Years 4 and 5 class. A well paced mental session showed pupils' fast recall of facts, such as $\frac{1}{8}$ of 88. A challenging task built well on Year 4 pupils' previous knowledge of coordinates. The good use of a teaching assistant's expertise enabled lower attaining Year 5 pupils to achieve well and develop their skills in division. As a result of very skilful teaching, all pupils in the class made very fast progress.
62. The leadership and management of mathematics are good. The coordinator has done a good job in moving the mathematics provision on since the last inspection and has addressed most issues effectively. Monitoring of the subject has given her a good understanding of most areas that need improving: the integration of ICT; improved analysis of test papers in order to identify strengths and weaknesses; and the need to give pupils more sharply focused mathematics targets. The school is setting out to tackle these areas.

Mathematics across the curriculum

63. Teachers sometimes make useful links with other subjects, which results in satisfactory provision overall for mathematics in other subjects. A good example was in a lesson where the teacher linked mathematical coordinates with pupils' map work in geography. A software package is helping to raise standards in mathematics. However, there is no overall planning to ensure such links are used systematically across the school and this results in some missed opportunities.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Improvement since the last inspection has been good.

- The number of pupils achieving the level above that expected of most pupils of their age remains low.
- Lessons are well prepared and are often enhanced by ICT.
- Pupils have very good attitudes in lessons.
- Opportunities for investigations are too restricted.

Commentary

64. The standard of pupils' work is currently at the level expected nationally in Year 2 and Year 6 overall. These standards, also indicated by national test results in 2004, demonstrate improvement since the previous inspection. Achievement is sound overall: good in acquiring factual knowledge and satisfactory in skills of investigation.
65. Pupils gain a good range of scientific knowledge. The recorded work in their books develops into a useful source of information. It is well set out and presented, showing pupils' very good attitudes and the pride they take in their work. Pupils concentrate and cooperate when working in pairs and groups in lessons. Topics often end with pieces of work that serve to consolidate learning.
66. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. There are some strengths in the teaching and also some areas requiring improvement to lift it to a good level overall. Teachers make good use of the interactive whiteboards as in a Year 6 lesson, when the introduction included a professional video on micro-organisms. In Year 2, the teacher used a computer simulation about forces from the Internet that involved pupils' interactively and consolidated what they had learned. Lessons are well prepared and, when available, support staff and other assistants are well deployed to help pupils with special educational needs.
67. When preparing resources for lessons, teachers generally provide only the materials and equipment that the investigation requires. This does not give the pupils the opportunity to select suitable and appropriate resources, to decide on their own methods of investigation to answer a question, or to consider ways in which their investigation might be improved. Hence, opportunities for pupils to make choices informed by their scientific knowledge and understanding are limited. This is the factor that prevents more of the most capable pupils from working at a higher level in lessons and exceeding national expectations for their age in lessons and assessments.
68. Leadership and management are satisfactory and have resulted in the effective and consistent development of pupils' scientific knowledge. Work remains to be done on providing more 'open-ended' opportunities for scientific investigation.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

Provision in ICT is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good.
- Teachers make good use of resources to enhance lessons across the curriculum.
- The school's plans for the development of the subject are well conceived and realistic.

Commentary

69. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection. Standards in Year 2 and Year 6 meet national expectations. Standards are not yet above expectations because some resources for the subject have been too recently acquired to allow pupils' skills to develop to this level. Nevertheless, they are rising because good teaching is leading to good achievement throughout the school. The pupils successfully use a wide range of software to support different areas of their work, including paint programs, spreadsheets and control applications as well as those for publishing and word processing. In addition, pupils competently use information and resources from the Internet. In Year 6, they used a presentation program well to organise their research on head lice into 'slides'. These included pictures, clipart, text and sounds. In using this type of software, they are engaged in making decisions about the reliability of information from different sources.
70. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers make judicious use of the recently installed interactive whiteboards to enhance their teaching in other subjects. In a Year 2 science lesson on forces, for example, the teacher very effectively consolidated pupils' knowledge and understanding by running a simulation from the Internet. In a Year 6 science lesson, pupils were highly engaged by an Internet-based movie about micro-organisms. This provided a very effective, high quality introduction to the lesson. In literacy lessons, pupils with special educational needs are able to reach the lessons' objectives by using simpler texts in a very clear format that meet their needs.
71. The coordinator for ICT has a good level of personal skill and is well placed to support her colleagues, through in-house training for example. ICT is a priority in the current school improvement plan and, with its own action plan, the subject is developing well in line with the school's strategy. Good use is made of a local facility to further the opportunities and experiences of older pupils. In addition, pupils have recently started to use a learning package that helps them understand their own standards and progress.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

72. ICT has started to make a good contribution to pupils' achievement in several areas of the curriculum. Teachers and pupils use word processing and presentation software in literacy, preparing 'talking books' for younger partners. The pupils have a clear understanding of the benefits of editing to achieve high quality in their finished work. An individual, computer based mathematics learning system is used throughout the school. However, the length and frequency of pupils' individual sessions are insufficient to make the most of the programme's potential to raise standards. The school is aware of this and intends to improve access to the system.

HUMANITIES

Insufficient evidence was gathered in **history** and **geography** to support an overall judgement on the quality of provision.

Geography

73. **Geography** was sampled by looking at displays and pupils' books and by talking with them about their work. In Years 4 and 5 pupils learn about the physical features of coastal regions. They learn what makes a beach and the impact waves have on land. They understand a range of geographical terms including 'erosion'. Younger pupils find out about climatic differences on earth. These include polar, desert and rain forest regions. The youngest pupils learn early mapping skills by walking around the school and finding out about the main features of the area. In lessons, they are guided well in drawing simple plans of their journey from home to school.
74. Portfolios of past work show that pupils also study two contrasting regions. They compare life in Kenya with life in their own locality. Pupils' work is well presented. They have good opportunities to use their literacy skills when writing in their geography books. Their work is illustrated well and this helps with understanding. In discussions, pupils in Year 6 talked enthusiastically about their work in geography and made good links between what they have learned and with what they see around them. For example, they talked about the way that waves have eroded Marsden Rock. They are familiar with some rivers and talk knowledgeably about the bridges across the River Tyne.

History

75. **History** was sampled in a similar way to geography. In a Years 4 and 5 lesson, pupils clearly enjoyed history and talked knowledgeably about the period studied. They had good opportunities to empathise with Bede the monk when learning about how he transferred from Saxon village life to life in the monastery. They role-played this important event in Bede's life and one pupil dressed up in clothes similar to those Bede might have worn. Older pupils in Year 6 learn about life before, during and after World War II. They are currently studying the changes in music since the war and thoroughly enjoyed finding out about the Beatles. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 study the ancient Greeks and younger pupils learn about the Great Fire of London and about old and new toys.
76. In most year groups, pupils' workbooks include many important facts, but much of it is identical irrespective of ability. There are limited opportunities for individual research or 'open-ended' enquiry to challenge the more capable pupils. The school takes pupils on a good range of visits to make history come alive for them. Young pupils visit the Toy Museum and older pupils visit Bede's World. The co-ordinator is aware that ICT needs to be used to enhance learning in the subject and proposed improvements form part of the subject's action plan.
77. In both subjects there are some missed opportunities for pupils to carry out their own research and there are no formal assessments in place to show how well pupils are learning.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Insufficient evidence was gathered in **art and design, design and technology, music** and **physical education** to support an overall judgement on quality of provision in each subject.

Art and design

78. The standard of much of the **art and design** work currently on display meets national expectations, although that produced by pupils in the Years 4 and 5 class is of a higher standard. In all classes, teachers try to link artwork to pupils' work in other subjects. Sometimes this works very well, as it did in a Years 4 and 5 art and design lesson when Paul Klee's painting was used as a stimulus and linked to their work on journeys in religious education. Although the link was clear to pupils, the focus on the art and design activities never wavered from the appreciation and interpretation of Klee's work, encouraging pupils to replicate his style through interpreting a journey of their own. On other occasions, art and design work largely serves an illustrative function, such as the Year 6 work on the Blitz in London and is less effective in developing pupils' art and design skills.
79. The co-ordinator has very good subject knowledge and infectious enthusiasm when she teaches. As yet she has undertaken no monitoring of the subject, but this is already timetabled; lesson observations will take place in the summer term. Combined with the fact that there is no assessment in the subject to generate an accurate view of standards, she has, to date, had limited impact on attainment across the school in art and design.

Design and technology

80. No **design and technology** lessons were timetabled during the inspection and there was very little work on display. However, an extensive, well-annotated portfolio of photographic evidence shows that pupils engage in a wide variety of projects. Designs were included but there was little evidence of evaluation of completed products by pupils. Finished products showed individuality; a Year 2 project on vehicles, for example, sported a covered wagon, a truck, an aeroplane, an amphibious car and a soft-top pink jeep.
81. As with art and design, there is no appropriate assessment system in place for design and technology and, to date, there has been no formal monitoring of plans or teaching. Both are timetabled to be put in place this school year.

Music

82. **Musical** performance is highly valued. Recordings of some past productions demonstrate good quality singing with challenging intervals of pitch and some demanding rhythms. Recorder players joined with the music coordinator to accompany the singing. When a whole school singing practice was observed, it became clear where this quality of singing originates. The teacher is enthusiastic and a good role model for pupils. Pupils respond with very good levels of effort and concentration. The teacher reminds them of the need for appropriate posture and breathing in order to produce quality work. They sing in rounds and achieve some simple two-part effects.
83. When talking about their class music work, younger pupils recall working as a class but not in groups. They have too few opportunities to compose their own work

through preparing simple patterns using a good range of instruments. Their understanding of the difference between the musical elements, such as pitch, dynamics and tempo, is poor. Older pupils could talk about one topic in which they used the tuned instruments to compose a melodic pattern. This was on a Chinese theme, using the pentatonic notes (rather like playing only the black notes of a piano). Pupils in the Years 5 and 6 class benefit from an instrumental teaching initiative. Each week, these pupils, their teacher and support assistant have a lesson on violin, viola or cello. The lessons are well structured and include activities that promote knowledge of symbols used in traditional notation. They also include essential exercises that help pupils internalise changes in pitch and rhythm.

84. Because the knowledgeable subject leader has not yet had the chance to influence practice, leadership of music is unsatisfactory with regard to the extent to which some non-specialist class teachers have been supported. This is planned for the summer term. Some staff do not have sufficient expertise to avoid teaching false information or to help pupils gain a clear understanding, for example of pitch, beat and rhythm. There are few tuned instruments such as xylophones and glockenspiels. Several of these are in need of some restoration to bring them to playable condition. Music is soon to be a priority of the school improvement plan. This will be a good opportunity to increase the coordinator's monitoring activities, highlight shortfalls in expertise and resources and bring about improvement.

Physical education

85. In **physical education**, indications are that standards by the end of Year 6 are at the level expected nationally. Standards in swimming are as expected at this age and pupils benefit from weekly sessions from Year 3 in a termly rota.
86. In a dance lesson in the Years 2 and 3 class, teaching and learning were very good and pupils' attainment was above the level normally found at this age. Pupils moved with good balance, poise and control. Good opportunities to evaluate and talk about their performance led to clear improvement. As a result, they achieved highly. This is an indication of the effectiveness of a new scheme, introduced to address the issue of dance in the last inspection. In another dance lesson, in the Years 5 and 6 class, teaching and learning were good and pupils composed dance routines in groups to *Rock Around The Clock*. They achieved well and worked at the level expected.
87. The co-ordinator has raised the profile of physical education, for instance through the school's Sport Partnership and Sport England. Recently, the football team reached the semi-finals of the English school's competition. The priority for development is recognised as the need to monitor standards more effectively and gain a better understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of teaching and learning through assessment procedures being put in place.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

88. Provision in this area was sampled. The school's contribution to pupils' personal, social and health education and citizenship has a very positive impact on pupils' behaviour, work ethic, thought for others and maturity.
89. The school is very successful in establishing genuinely warm and trusting relationships between staff and pupils. It encourages pupils to take their work seriously and to

become actively involved in their own learning. Pupils of all ages and abilities and of both genders have a very good work ethic and this helps them to make good progress as they move up through the school. Pupils have good social skills; they talk confidently to visitors and are quick to show common courtesies such as holding doors open for friends, staff and visitors. They listen attentively, both to adults and to each other and their behaviour is exemplary. All these features make a positive contribution to learning. In addition, the spiritual influence of the school is powerful and contributes greatly to its success in developing mature and responsible young citizens.

90. Provision for health and relationships education and drugs awareness is good, enabling pupils to have a clear understanding of associated issues. The school council ensures that all pupils have a voice and develop an understanding of how views are considered and decisions arrived at in a democratic way.

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	2
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	1
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	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
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	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).