

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **St Joseph's RC School**

148a Borough High Street/London

LEA area: Southwark

Unique reference number: 100834

Headteacher: Mrs Sue Thorn

Lead inspector: Hazel Callaghan

Dates of inspection: 27<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2005

Inspection number: 267839

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: 3-11  
Gender of pupils: Mixed  
Number on roll: 231.5 (full-time equivalent)

School address: 148a Borough High Street  
London  
Postcode: SE1 1LB

Telephone number: 020 74072642  
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Satisfactory authority: Governing body  
Name of chair of governors: Canon Michael Cooley

Date of previous inspection: 7<sup>th</sup> June 1999

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St Joseph's is a voluntary aided Roman Catholic primary school and admits pupils from across the many local Roman Catholic parishes. Most pupils are from committed Catholic families, but some non-Catholic children are admitted when there are places available. St Joseph's is an average sized school with 221 boys and girls attending full-time education. A further 21 children attend part-time in the nursery, either in the mornings or afternoons. The majority of children come from a range of ethnic minority groups and an above average proportion comes from families that have home languages other than English (69 per cent). At the previous inspection, children were judged to be below average in their standards on entry to the school. Children are now judged as well below average because many have a poor knowledge and understanding of English when they start school and this has a significant impact on their other learning. The most commonly spoken languages other than English are Spanish, Twi and Tagalog. The number of pupils moving in and out of the school at other times than is usual is above that found nationally. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs is usually above the national average (18.8 per cent). This year it is broadly average. Pupils' needs, however, are varied. Pupils have been identified as having specific and moderate learning difficulties, speech and language difficulties, visual impairment, physical disabilities and children who have difficulties within the autistic spectrum. Five pupils have statements of special need. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is broadly average but the socio-economic characteristics of the local area is judged as below average overall with many families living in overcrowded

accommodation. There are frequent changes in the teaching staff. The school has strong links with the local Catholic Church and its community and a few local schools.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
22254	Hazel Callaghan	Lead inspector	Foundation Stage, Science Art and design, Design and technology, Special educational needs
9173	Sarah McDermott	Lay inspector	
32106	John Zealander	Team inspector	Mathematics ICT History Geography
15023	Ali Haouas	Team inspector	English Music Physical education English as an additional language personal, social and health education and citizenship

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

St Josephs is an improving school because of the clear focus of the new headteacher. The effectiveness of the school is satisfactory. Pupils make satisfactory achievement overall. Teaching and learning are generally satisfactory with particular strengths in the nursery. The school provides **satisfactory value for money**.

#### The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The headteacher has a strong sense of purpose and clear vision for the future development of the school.
- The provision in the nursery is very good.
- Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are not high enough in Year 6.
- Assessment of pupils' work and progress is not used sufficiently to support teachers' planning or improve pupils' learning.
- Higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged
- Relationships through the school are very good.
- Subject co-ordinator's roles have not been sufficiently developed.
- The governing body fails to meet several of its statutory requirements and does not sufficiently enable the school to improve.

The school has gone through a period of change and uncertainty in the last few years. During that time insufficient progress was made to address the concerns of the last report and improvement has been unsatisfactory. This is beginning to change under the direction of the new headteacher and improvements have accelerated in the last year.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Children in the nursery achieve **very well** because of very good provision. Pupils achieve **satisfactorily** through the rest of the school. Children enter the nursery with standards that are well below average, especially in their knowledge of English. They make a very good start to their education in the nursery so that children attain broadly average standards for their age in most areas of learning as they transfer into reception class. Children continue to achieve well in their personal, social and emotional development so they are confident learners ready for new challenges by the end of reception. They continue to achieve well in the development of the English language. Overall achievement is satisfactory and standards are broadly average when children transfer into Year 1. By the end of Year 2 standards are above average in reading and average in writing, mathematics, science and ICT. Although achievement is satisfactory overall, achievement in reading through Years 1 and 2 is good.

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

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average; E\* - in the bottom 5 per cent of schools*

*Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2*

By the end of Year 6 standards in English and mathematics are broadly average. They are below average in science and ICT because there are too few pupils attaining the higher standard of Level 5. Achievement for the higher attaining pupils is unsatisfactory because they are not sufficiently challenged and their learning extended. Pupils' overall achievement has improved this year because there has been a more stable teaching staff and this has created a more settled learning environment. Standards, however, have declined since the previous inspection. The achievement of the majority of pupils with English as an additional language and those from an ethnic minority background is satisfactory overall. Achievement of pupils with special educational needs is also satisfactory and they make steady progress towards their individual targets. Standards in the other subjects - art and design, design and technology, history, geography, music and physical education - have not been judged because they were only sampled.

The provision for pupils' **personal development is good overall and is very good in their moral development**. The provision for pupils' spiritual and social development is good. Their awareness of the other cultures around them is satisfactory. Pupils' attitudes to work and behaviour are good.

### **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The curriculum provided is satisfactory overall. Pupils' learning is enhanced by visits to places of interest and the use of visitors to the school. **Teaching and learning are satisfactory**. Very good teaching was clearly evident in the nursery where children's individual personal and learning needs were very well met. Teachers through the school have high expectations of pupils' good behaviour to which they respond well. Teaching assistants are well deployed. The quality of pupils' learning, however, is limited by the teachers' inconsistent use of assessments to identify what pupils can already do and what they now need to know and understand. Pupils are not sufficiently enabled to understand how they can improve their work. Assessment in the Foundation Stage is good. The school does not sufficiently enable parents to support their child's learning at home by giving them information about what is being learned or about their progress.

### **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are both **satisfactory** overall. Governance is **unsatisfactory**. The headteacher provides the strength of leadership the school needs. She has a clear view of what is needed to enable the school to improve and has started to implement clear structures and procedures to enable this to happen. Changes in staffing have complicated the speed at which improvements can be made but all the staff are now gaining a better insight into how the school needs to move forward. Management of several subjects is unsatisfactory. The governors made clear choices about what they wanted in a new headteacher and the strong Catholic ethos is being maintained well. Their knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the other aspects of the school is not sufficiently clear. Several minor statutory requirements have not been met and the need to formalise risk assessment, identified at the last inspection, has not been addressed. Financial management is good.

### **PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

Parents are supportive of the school and recognise the good levels of pastoral care provided by the staff. They feel it is a good school and fully support its strong Catholic traditions. Pupils enjoy school but would like to have the opportunity to be more independent and suggest ways the school can improve through strategies such as a school council. They respect the staff, who listen to their ideas.



## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- ensure data from assessments is used to inform teachers' planning and support pupils' knowledge of how they can improve;
- raise standards in ICT by end of Year 6;
- raise the achievement of the potentially higher attaining pupils;
- raise governors' awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of the school so they are more able to effect improvements;
- further develop leadership and management of all subjects;

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- make formal arrangements for regular risk assessments;
- ensure annual reports give clear information to parents on their child's standards and progress;
- ensure that all required information is included in the prospectus and governors' annual report to parents.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

#### Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement is **satisfactory** overall. It is **good** in the Foundation Stage. Standards are **broadly average** at the end of Year 6.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make a very good start to their education in the nursery.
- Children achieve well in reading in Years 1 and 2.
- Weaknesses in assessment slow pupils' progress.
- Potentially high attaining pupils are not achieving as well as they could.
- Standards in ICT are below average in Year 6.

#### Commentary

1. Achievement through the Foundation Stage is good overall. In the nursery it is very good. Children enter the nursery with standards that are well below average especially in their knowledge and understanding of English and this has a significant impact on their standards in mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world. Standards in their personal development and creative development are below average when they start in the nursery because children have had little opportunity to socialise outside the family home or to develop their creative skills. Standards in their physical development are broadly average especially in their large movements, control and balance. They make a very good start to their education in the nursery and most children attain broadly average standards for their age in all areas of learning by the time they transfer into reception class. Children continue to achieve well in their personal, social and emotional development in reception so they are confident learners ready for new challenges. They achieve well in the development of the English language, gaining confidence to speak out in many situations. They are becoming eager to write and express their ideas. Overall achievement is satisfactory in the reception class. Most children are attaining the standards expected for them in the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning but very few are of a higher standard.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.8 (18.4)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	16.7 (16.4)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	18.3 (18.8)	16.2 (16.3)

*There were 28 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

2. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in Years 1 and 2, except in reading which is good. Pupils attain average standards in speaking and listening, writing, mathematics, science and ICT. Standards in reading are above average because of the effective focus given to the teaching of this aspect of pupils' learning. Standards are not as high as those judged in the 2004 National Curriculum tests. In 2004, standards compared with all schools were well above average and in comparison with similar schools standards were in the top 5 per cent in reading, writing and mathematics. (Similar schools are those with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals.) Evidence from

pupils' current work shows that these assessments were not secure. The high proportion of pupils judged as attaining the higher standard of Level 3 in writing and in mathematics is not evident and there is no evidence of a sharp decline since pupils have been in Year 3. Standards currently are not as high as those at the previous inspection but this is because children are well below average on entry to the nursery. A high proportion of pupils enter the school with very little knowledge of English and the proportion of pupils with special educational needs over the last three years has been above the national average.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.5 (25.8)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	27.2 (29.2)	27.0 (26.8)
science	27.5 (28.7)	28.6 (28.6)

*There were 25 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

**Please note:** Pupils in Key Stage 2 have taken their national tests in 2005 but the school has not as yet received their results.

3. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in Years 3-6. This is significantly better than last year when pupils' progress since they were in Year 2 was well below average in English and mathematics and in the bottom 5 per cent of schools in science. This apparent poor achievement is due to insecure assessment, changes in teaching staff and uncertainties in leadership. Achievement has improved because there has been a more stable teaching staff and this has created a more settled learning environment. Standards in Year 6 are now average in speaking and listening and reading. Standards in writing are broadly average but there are fewer pupils attaining Level 5 than is found nationally. Standards in mathematics are average and in science standards are below average. Pupils' progress in reading has not kept pace with that seen in Year 2, but many pupils have moved school during Key Stage 2 and this has disrupted their learning. The provision for ICT has improved since the previous inspection, especially in the last two years, but it has not had time to have had sufficient impact on pupils' standards which remain below average in Year 6. Pupils have made unsatisfactory achievement in ICT in Years 3-6 and they make insufficient use of their knowledge and skills in other subjects.
4. Higher attaining pupils are not making sufficient progress in their learning in many subjects because teachers' expectations are not high enough. Although satisfactory progress is made in many lessons, pupils are not sufficiently challenged to attain higher standards over time. Insecure assessment judgements have hindered teachers' understanding of what pupils are capable of and consequently their learning has not been sufficiently extended.
5. The achievement of the majority of pupils with English as an additional language and those from an ethnic minority background is satisfactory through the school. The needs of those who are in the early stages of learning English are satisfactorily identified and support is targeted through the deployment of a designated teaching assistant for these pupils, but not all teachers are effective in promoting pupils' new vocabulary and understanding in some lessons.

6. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is broadly average this year although it is usually above that found nationally. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress towards their individualised targets. When effective support is given and time is available for pupils to practise their focus tasks they achieve well.
7. Standards in the other subjects - art and design, design and technology, history, geography, music and physical education - have not been judged as they were not a focus of the inspection. These subjects were only sampled and so it was not possible to make overall achievement and attainment judgements on them.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

Pupils have **good** attitudes and behave **well**. The school promotes spiritual, moral, social and cultural development **well**. The attendance and punctuality of the pupils are **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The strong Catholic ethos underpins the very good promotion of moral development and the resulting good behaviour of the pupils.
- Pupils have a good range of opportunities to help in school, but they do not take sufficient initiative in their learning.
- The school's good promotion of spiritual development increases the pupils' sense of self-worth and leads to very good relationships.
- The school is not making the most of its wealth of races and languages to promote multi cultural appreciation.

### **Commentary**

8. The school has very good systems to promote good behaviour and instil discipline. All staff have high expectations of good behaviour and are consistent in dealing with unsatisfactory conduct. Catholic principles pervade lessons and activities, so pupils are good at thinking of others and considering how their unsatisfactory behaviour will affect their classmates. Most pupils behave very well and it is rare to see learning disrupted by silly actions. There have been no exclusions. However, some pupils find it difficult to conform and often need a firm word from adults. Consequently behaviour is now judged as good rather than very good as it was at the time of the previous inspection.
9. The promotion of social development is good. In the nursery and reception classes pupils progress very well in their personal development because they are given plenty of opportunities to play together, look after their belongings and listen to each other. Older pupils have a wide range of responsibilities to encourage them to look after their fellow pupils and raise money for the less fortunate. Pupils with English as an additional language and those from minority ethnic backgrounds mix well with their peers and are keen to participate in activities and school events. The majority of pupils are motivated in their work and are well integrated into the school. This contributes significantly to the progress they make.
10. However, there are insufficient opportunities in lessons for pupils to collaborate and share bright ideas to make learning interesting and communal. Many pupils wait to be

told what to do because they are not used to taking the initiative and having a go themselves.

11. There is a deep sense of spirituality in school. Pupils have many opportunities to think profoundly about their Catholic faith in assemblies, religious education and when they celebrate mass. Pupils' understanding of other faiths has increased with the study of Islam and Judaism. The school community is very harmonious and pupils get on extremely well with each other. The headteacher and her staff are very good at instilling a sense of self-worth in pupils and encouraging them to applaud others' talents and successes. However, many lessons, although competent, are flat and uninspiring so the spirituality and sparkle linked to a genuine joy in learning is often limited.
12. The promotion of cultural development is satisfactory. There are good opportunities for pupils to experience art, music and dance. One teacher has involved pupils very well in finding out more about the country of Ghana. However, the school is not taking full advantage of the many backgrounds of its pupils to extend the pupils' knowledge and understanding of other countries and cultures. Overall the promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is not as strong as at the time of the last inspection.
13. The attendance rate this year has declined from that recorded in 2003/2004 (96.5 per cent) and is currently satisfactory at 94.6 per cent attendance. Attendance is not as good as at the time of the last inspection because it has not risen in line with most other primary schools. There are an increasing number of occasions when parents take their children out of school in term time to travel to their country of origin. The headteacher is sympathetic to the need for families to maintain ties with home, but realises that the school does not have sufficiently rigorous holiday request forms to emphasise that regular education is essential for good achievement. Each day attendance is well monitored to ensure pupils are safe. However, there is insufficient tracking of trends over time to ensure pupils from different ethnic groups are attending school equally well. Most pupils arrive in good time for the start of lessons, but there are a significant number of pupils who slip into class late.

**Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%) 2003/2004**

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	3.3	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.*

**QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

The quality of education provided by the school is **satisfactory**. The curriculum is enriched by the use of visits and visitors to the school. Teaching and learning are **satisfactory**. Pupils' care, welfare and guidance are **satisfactory**.

**Teaching and learning**

Teaching and learning are **satisfactory** through the school except in the nursery where they are **very good**. Assessment of pupils' work is **unsatisfactory** except in the Foundation Stage where it is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The needs of children of all ethnic groups and abilities are very well met in the nursery.
- Relationships are good and pupils want to do well.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils' attention and good behaviour.
- Teaching support assistants are deployed well.
- Teachers do not sufficiently assess the standards and progress of pupils and ensure that activities build well on what they already know and can do.
- Higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged in some lessons.
- Pupils are not sufficiently enabled to evaluate their own learning and progress.
- New tracking systems are now used successfully to monitor aspects of pupils' achievement.

### Commentary

14. Teaching and learning are good overall in the Foundation Stage and very good in the nursery. The teacher and nursery nurse in the nursery work together as a strong team with a very good understanding of the needs of these young children. There is a calm, purposeful atmosphere in the nursery where children are enabled to extend their knowledge and skills very effectively through a range of well-chosen activities, focused tasks led by adults and through self-initiated play. Children's purposeful attitudes and desire to learn are also well promoted in the reception class. Children's curiosity and desire to express their ideas is well nurtured. Their skills are satisfactorily developed and their desire to write is well stimulated. Many are now ready to write at greater length. Assessment procedures in the Foundation Stage are well developed and effectively monitor children's progress and standards. Teachers and nursery nurses know their children well and adapt activities and questions to match their needs. Information about their progress is not as yet used to formalise targets for the next stage of their learning.
15. Teaching and learning through the rest of the school are satisfactory. No unsatisfactory lessons were observed. Relationships through the school are very good and pupils respond well to their teachers and support staff. Adults have high expectations for pupils' good behaviour and it is rare for lessons to be disrupted by unsatisfactory behaviour. Pupils show interest in their tasks but are not sufficiently involved in discussing ideas and strategies. Opportunities for pupils to work independently are not used enough to promote their questions and exploration.

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 33 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	3 (9%)	9 (27%)	21 (64%)	0	0	0

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

16. Support staff are well deployed through the school and many are developing their expertise well so they are able to support pupils during whole class sessions and when teaching groups of pupils.
17. The quality of support provided for pupils with English as an additional language is satisfactory overall. In the best teaching, pupils are effectively targeted and are grouped to benefit either from peer support or from teaching assistants. Pupils' needs are identified in teachers' planning but this is not consistent across classes. This works best when support strategies are explicitly identified and the assistant has been briefed about the support needed. In Years 2 and 5 where this happened, the assistant knew the pupils well and was seated satisfactorily to support them during the introduction. Satisfactory emphasis is put on speaking and listening as a vehicle for learning with specific attention paid to vocabulary. Where support was less effective this was because needs were not explicitly identified. This often coincided with lack of experience and knowledge about support strategies for pupils with English as an additional language. Although minority ethnic pupils are attentive during lessons, on a par with most of their peers, many do not participate actively in lessons. This is mainly due to the fact that the school does not analyse assessment data by ethnicity and use it to ensure that those who are at risk of underachieving are identified at an early stage and support provided to address their needs.
18. The teaching and learning of pupils with special educational needs are satisfactory. Pupils' individual education plans set out a satisfactory range of activities to enable them to work towards their individual targets. Where these targets are similar to work being covered by the rest of the class effective progress is made. When the pupils' targets are dissimilar to learning for the rest of the class, time is not given consistently for the pupils with special educational needs to practise their identified tasks. Pupils with statements of special needs are effectively supported so that they successfully participate in lessons.
19. Teachers monitor pupils' work in lessons satisfactorily and use the information to set the next piece of work. They are beginning to develop their procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress but the information provided is not used enough to inform future teaching or to support pupils' progress. Some teachers do not have a secure hold on the standards pupils should be attaining and are not always sufficiently clear about how to move them on to the next level. Higher attaining pupils are often insufficiently challenged by their tasks and questioning is not used effectively to extend their thinking.
20. Pupils are encouraged to try hard but are not involved sufficiently in evaluating their work so they know how to improve. Targets for the next stage of learning in English and mathematics have been introduced into Year 2 and these are enabling pupils to understand how they can improve their work, but this is not consistent through the school. Teachers are clear about what they are to teach but not always sufficiently clear about what the outcomes are to be in terms of pupils' learning. Most teachers share with the class what they are to do in the lesson but rarely are pupils engaged in considering how well they have achieved these goals by the end. Teachers' marking is celebratory but does not sufficiently focus pupils on how to improve the quality of their work.
21. The headteacher has introduced a system of tracking pupils' attainment and progress in English, mathematics and science and this is enabling the staff to identify pupils who are underachieving and those who need greater support. This is working

effectively. The records of achievement highly praised at the previous inspection are still an important part in recognising good effort and raising pupils' self-esteem but as the work is not compared with National Curriculum levels it has little impact on identifying standards or ensuring good progress. Pupils' skills development in subjects other than English, mathematics and science are not assessed. The weaknesses in assessment have been identified by the headteacher who is working with staff to improve their knowledge and expertise.

## The curriculum

The school provides **satisfactory** opportunities for pupils' learning and **good** enrichment through a wide range of visits and visitors. Accommodation and resources are **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The range of visits to enrich the curriculum is good and enhances pupils' learning.
- The deployment of teaching assistants is effective and has a positive impact on pupils' learning.
- Statutory requirements for music are not being met because the subject is not systematically planned and taught regularly to a number of year groups.
- Insufficient attention is given to investigations in science and mathematics.

### Commentary

22. The curriculum is satisfactorily planned with most statutory requirements being met except for music. The school is aware of this and has embarked on a curriculum review with plans to buy in specialist teaching in the creative arts. The school has focused most of its developments on literacy and numeracy, and developments in the rest of the curriculum have been negligible with a number of subject leaders only in post for a short time. The school places important focus on the development of personal attributes, encouraging pupils to develop good skills and make satisfactory choices. Pupils' ICT and literacy skills, however, are not yet widely used to support learning in other subjects.
23. All pupils, whatever their background, have satisfactory access to the full curriculum, including activities organised outside the school day. Boys and girls participate on an equal footing in most activities on offer. Pupils with English as an additional language and those from an ethnic minority background are fully integrated and involved in all activities. In view of the diverse background of pupils, the school does not draw sufficiently on the cultural and linguistic heritage of pupils.
24. Although the school offers only a narrow range of activities outside school hours, the curriculum is effectively enhanced through a wide range of visits catering for all year groups and subjects. Good use is made of these resources, for instance to develop first hand experiences in learning in history, religious education and in literacy. The headteacher is very committed to increasing the number and range of activities on offer after school hours. Activities such as football, which is taught by external qualified coaches, basic skills in cookery and gardening and involvement with the London symphonietta in Year 6 are all well attended.
25. The school has invested positively in the number of teaching assistants with each class having one assistant attached to the class. They have been effectively trained and are making a valuable contribution to pupils' learning. All assistants keep detailed



records on the pupils they support which they share with the class teacher. Good interventions were used during the week of inspection particularly in supporting pupils with statements of special educational needs and in some instances pupils with English as an additional language. The curriculum for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. The school does not formally identify those pupils who are gifted or talented and consequently they are not sufficiently challenged in their areas of expertise.

26. The school has accommodation to teach and support primary age pupils. The outside area for reception children has improved, although the rooms for both nursery and reception classes remain crowded. The new ICT suite is helping pupils to improve their knowledge and use of computers. The playground has been well planned to make the best use of a tight space and to provide an attractive garden and a sports compound.

### **Care, guidance and support**

The care, welfare, health and safety of the pupils are **satisfactory**. The school provides **satisfactory** support and guidance for the pupils. The involvement of pupils by seeking, valuing and acting on their views is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school provides very good support for pupils who have domestic or social problems.
- Pupils feel comfortable and at ease because they have good trusting relationships with adults in the school.
- Pupils are justified in feeling they should have more of a voice in the daily running of the school.
- Teachers do not have sufficiently well established monitoring systems to enable them to set work that is accurately matched to individual pupil need.
- The school still does not have formal procedures to ensure that the site is regularly and rigorously checked for potential hazards.

### **Commentary**

27. The school has satisfactory procedures to ensure that pupils are safe and secure. There are a good number of staff with first aid qualifications and minor accidents are recorded carefully. Nevertheless the school does not have clear policy or practice on administering medicine. All staff know what to do should they be suspicious of child abuse. Most staff have had recent training in child protection procedures, but it has not been offered as it should to the administration and caretaking staff. The site is checked carefully each day for potential hazards. However, the school has not addressed the key issue of the last inspection by setting up formal systems to monitor the health and safety of the premises.
28. Pupils with particular emotional or domestic needs are very well looked after. In her first year at school the headteacher has quickly established which pupils need special help and attention. Parents feel that both they and their children are very well supported by the school staff. The school is quick to find the right support to settle troubled pupils and put them back on track so that they achieve well. Effective use is made of a wide range of outside professionals, such as counsellors and educational psychologists, to give well matched guidance. Intellectual support and guidance,

however, are not as good as at the last inspection because the school has not moved forward as quickly as most primary schools in developing assessment procedures. Pupils with special educational needs have clear targets for their future learning that recognise their difficulties and the small steps often needed to enable them to achieve. However, many individual plans do not show the frequency for pupils' practice or how their success is to be measured. Those pupils with statements of need are regularly assessed and their progress and needs identified as part of the annual review process.

29. Pupils have good relationships with adults in the school. The vast majority know that they can turn to an adult if they are feeling worried or sad. In many instances the chosen adult is a member of the support staff because several teachers are comparatively new and have not established firm relationships with the pupils. Pupils are keen to give their ideas and increase their involvement in the running of the school. Currently there is no school council and the survey of pupils' views is sporadic. The headteacher has made a good start by informally gauging pupils' opinions on uniform and the teaching of a modern foreign language, but consultation is not yet regular enough to give pupils a democratic voice in the school.

### **Partnership with parents, other schools and the community**

The school has a **satisfactory** partnership with parents. Links with the community are **good**. Links with other schools and colleges are **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents find the school supportive because staff are welcoming, accessible and willing to sort out problems for the children's benefit.
- The school does not provide parents with sufficient opportunities to enable them to help their children in their learning.
- Reports do not give parents a sufficiently clear message on how their children have progressed in each subject over the year.
- The school makes good use of its interesting locality to enliven the pupils' learning.

### **Commentary**

30. Parents are supportive of the school and appreciate all it does to educate and guide their children. Parents feel very much 'at home' in school and are comfortable in asking for advice on their children's progress and wider social issues. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Should a parent have a complaint the headteacher moves quickly to sort out the problem and allay any concerns.
31. The school provides satisfactory information to parents. Satisfactory levels of communication with the families of pupils with special educational needs have been initiated and are sensitively maintained. Parents of pupils with statements of special educational needs, however, are kept fully informed and involved by the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO). They are fully involved in the review of their child's progress and needs.
32. The headteacher involved parents well in the whole school review undertaken on her arrival, but otherwise routine consultation of parents is not sufficiently established. General school communication is good with regular newsletters and a well used notice board. Teachers are accessible each day for parents to raise queries. Good practice

has been set in the nursery and reception classes with a thorough meeting to introduce parents to educational routines. A reading workshop for parents also proved successful in involving parents more in their children's learning.

33. However, elsewhere there are insufficient links with parents to enable them to support their children's learning effectively for the following reasons:
  - homework is inconsistent and invariably done on loose sheets which parents do not see again.
  - parents do not receive regular information on what is being taught in the classroom.
  - pupils do not have targets for improvement so parents do not know how they can help their children to improve (a key issue at the last inspection).
  - home-school books are not the rule, except for behaviour management and in one of the younger classes.
34. In addition the annual reports do not give parents a clear idea how their children have improved over the year in each subject. The lack of comprehensive assessment systems means that teachers cannot give an accurate report to parents on progress.
35. The school values its interesting locality. As much as possible the pupils walk to visit such landmarks as Tate Modern, Southwark Cathedral and the Globe Theatre to experience life in the Borough community. Good links with local organisations such as the Bankside Open Spaces Trust have led to improved use of the neighbouring play area for sport and recreation. The school continues to work effectively with the two attached Catholic parishes to guide the pupils in their personal and religious development.
36. The headteacher makes effective use of her contacts with local schools to seek out good practice for her teachers to observe. In particular the school is building up links with the adjacent Church of England primary school for professional development and to organise better access to their sites. Pupils from both schools come together for joint celebrations. However, there is not enough contact with other schools for such events as sports competitions or musical concerts to extend and enliven the curriculum.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership and management of the school are **satisfactory** overall. The headteacher provides **good** leadership. Governance is **unsatisfactory** overall, but financial management is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher provides good vision for the school and has identified key areas for improvement.
- Procedures for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning are insufficiently rigorous.
- Governors do not have a secure grasp of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and are not effective in shaping its direction.
- Good financial management is enabling the school to address priorities for development.

### **Commentary**

37. The headteacher has been in post since the start of the school year. In that time she has evaluated the needs of the school carefully and has begun to put in place plans and actions that will improve the quality of provision in many areas. She has a clear vision and this is being shared amongst the school community. She has made some key appointments to the staff that will strengthen the senior management team. High turnover of staff has meant that there has been a lack of continuity and a number of teachers have been appointed on short-term contracts in the past. This has not enabled the management of the school to be systematically developed with the result that some subject leaders have had few opportunities to develop their expertise and monitor standards in their subjects.
38. The headteacher's vision for continuous improvement is effectively shared with the staff, who work hard for the benefit of the pupils. Those with leadership responsibility are effective at motivating other members of staff. The aims and Catholic values of the school are well reflected in its work. The capacity for school improvement is now good and several initiatives are already improving the provision and so raising pupils' achievement.
39. Overall, the quality of leadership by senior staff is satisfactory. Their relationships with each other and the pupils ensure that they are good role models and they are keen to move the school further forward under the direction of the headteacher. Members of staff work well as a team and the effective relationship between teachers and teaching assistants is a strength that is of real benefit to the pupils. Priorities for the future development of the school are good, with a sharp focus on addressing weaknesses and raising standards. Strategies already employed are having an impact on raising teachers' expectations and awareness of how to improve. The ways in which targets for improvement are to be met are quite clear but the recent changes in the school staff mean that these strategies have not yet been firmly established.
40. The management of the school is satisfactory. Performance management procedures are an integral part of the school's work and teachers' targets for improvement are effectively matched to the school's overall targets. The quality of monitoring of teaching and learning in lessons has been less robust and it is only this year that the headteacher has worked alongside staff to help them understand and implement this important activity. Procedures for monitoring and evaluating the school's performance are new with tracking systems for monitoring pupils' standards and progress having been introduced this year. She has shared this and staff and teachers are beginning to analyse tests and assessments in the subjects for which they have responsibility. The headteacher is aware of the need to develop and improve provision for pupils with English as an additional language and minority ethnic pupils. She demonstrates real commitment and has successfully deployed one of the teaching assistants to support pupils with the greatest needs in two classes. As yet there is no analysis of the performance of different ethnic groups within the school and there is a lack of data on the performance of pupils with English as an additional language.
41. Governance is unsatisfactory. There are some statutory responsibilities that have not been completed including the development of a formal system of risk assessment that was an issue from the previous inspection report. Furthermore the governing body does not have a clear view of the school's relative strengths and weaknesses. Governors are supportive but the governing body does not have sufficient knowledge to offer challenge to the leadership of the school. Financial management is secure and governors apply the principles of best value very effectively. Effective planning has ensured that funds have been set aside to meet development plans and to support the requirements of workforce reform. Development plans are costed but, as the school

improvement plan is new this year, it is too early to judge its effectiveness in raising achievement. Overall the school provides satisfactory value for money. Pupils make satisfactory achievement overall and important aspects of school improvement have accelerated this year.

**Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005**

<b>Income and expenditure (£)</b>	
Total income	831,947
Total expenditure	832,141
Expenditure per pupil	3,666

<b>Balances (£)</b>	
Balance from previous year	68,745
Balance carried forward to the next	68,551

## **PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES**

### **AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

42. The provision for the children in the Foundation Stage is **good overall**. It is **very good** in the nursery.
43. Children enter the nursery with standards that are well below average, especially in their knowledge and understanding of English, and this has a significant impact on their standards in other aspects of their learning. They make a very good start to their education in the nursery and achieve very well. Most children attain broadly average standards for their age in most areas of learning by the time they transfer into reception class.
44. Overall achievement is satisfactory in the reception class. Standards are broadly average when children transfer into Year 1. Most children are attaining the standards expected for them in the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning but very few are of a higher standard.
45. Teaching and learning are good in the Foundation Stage. In the nursery they are very good. Procedures for assessment in the Foundation Stage are clearly developed and used well to track children's development and progress. Formal targets for what the children need to learn and be able to do next have not been introduced. Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are good. There is a clear philosophy that leads teaching and organisation. Children's needs are at the heart of planning and there is good team work between teachers and the nursery nurses. The headteacher and co-ordinator work well together and there is clear focus for future improvement. The reception area outside the classroom has been significantly improved since the previous inspection.

### **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children achieve well in this aspect of their development.
- Children's independence and self-organisation skills are well promoted in the nursery.
- All staff work as a strong team to nurture children's self-esteem and confidence.
- Relationships are very good so children feel valued and secure.
- Children are not sufficiently enabled to plan, organise and evaluate their own activities in the reception class.

#### **Commentary**

46. Standards in children's personal development are below average when they start in the nursery because children have had little opportunity to socialise outside the family home. This area of learning receives a high profile when children start school and they achieve well. This is due to very good teaching in the nursery, good teaching in the reception class and very good relationships throughout the Foundation Stage. In both classes there is a well planned and ordered environment in which children quickly settle and feel secure. They make confident relationships with those around them and

consequently make good progress in their learning. They thrive in the calm reassuring environment of the nursery. Even the shyest child responds very well in this sensitive and caring environment. In the nursery, there are many opportunities for children to organise themselves, choose their own resources and try activities for themselves. Behaviour is very good and children show sustained interest and concentration. Similar routines are continued in the reception class. A satisfactory range of activities is made available in the classroom and outside area from which children can choose. Many are effectively linked to the focus teaching of the day with other resources and activities available. There is very little opportunity, however, for children to plan, organise and evaluate their own choice of activity that they can continue over time so developing personal skills and independence in their learning. Effective interaction with the teaching staff in both classes ensures that children's self-esteem and confidence grow. Children continue to achieve well in their personal, social and emotional development in reception class so they are confident learners ready for new challenges. The strong Catholic ethos promotes children's awareness of faith and religious traditions and the children develop caring attitudes towards each other and respect for each other's ideas and feelings. By the time children enter Year 1 most have attained the standards expected in the Early Learning Goals.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Interest in stories and rhymes is very well promoted.
- Children in the early stages of learning English make good progress.
- Effective strategies are used to extend children's vocabulary and confidence to speak.
- Children are eager to express their ideas in reception class.
- There is insufficient encouragement for more able children to write at length.

### **Commentary**

47. Children enter the nursery with standards that are well below average because many do not speak or understand English when they start school and this has a significant impact on their standards in other aspects of their learning. In the nursery, children in the early stages of learning English make very good progress. They are immersed in English but are well supported in their understanding by the use of visual clues such as signs and pictures so they are enabled to participate. By the end of nursery most are responding effectively to questions and volunteering comments. Children's interest and enjoyment of stories and books is well promoted in both the nursery and the reception class. Lots of discussion in small groups and with individuals develops children's language and abilities to communicate. A very successful strategy used in the nursery is for children to draw 'story props' which helps them retell the story just read. Very skilful questioning supports their recall, prompting lots of detail as they draw. The strategy is satisfactorily developed in the reception class. Opportunities to communicate clearly and to respond appropriately in different circumstances are used successfully to build children's confidence when speaking in front of a group. By the end of reception children have learned many letter sounds that are beginning to help them read new words and to write simple sentences and captions. Many are now eager to write and they copy words from the board and from word banks. There are many good opportunities to write but not enough encouragement for children to write at length, even though some are ready to do so. Children achieve well in this aspect of

their learning because of the good and often very good teaching they receive. By the time children enter reception many are of average standards for their age. By the time children enter Year 1 most are attaining the Early Learning Goals but few are further on in their development.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Practical activities develop children's mathematical understanding well.
- Activities build effectively on what children know so they achieve well.
- Children's knowledge of number is used in many ways so learning is reinforced.
- Time for more extended tasks is insufficient in the reception class.

### **Commentary**

48. When children start in the nursery standards are well below average because children do not have the English language to respond. Very good teaching quickly provides the vocabulary of number and frequent opportunities to count, order and sort objects develop children's good achievement. A simple activity such as printing with their hands becomes a good opportunity for children to count. As each finger is painted they feel, hear and say their numbers up to five. In play activities as children sort colourful fruit the nursery nurse was quick to prompt the more able children to count on up to ten. Opportunities to develop children's mathematical language and understanding are developed in all activities. As children drew the characters a story as they appeared, the terms 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> were discussed for the oldest children.
49. Good teaching in the reception helps children to use mathematical language more confidently. Interesting practical activities effectively develop children's understanding of the value of numbers so they can answer simple questions such as 'Who has the most?' and 'Who is the winner?' in their number games. The teacher and nursery nurse in the reception class challenge children's knowledge of number and understanding of mathematical language in all sorts of activities. Time given to this aspect of learning, however, is not great. Whole class sessions and group activities are planned each day but more extended tasks are not sufficiently provided so that the more able children use their knowledge of number to solve problems. By the time children enter Year 1 most have attained the standards expected in the Early Learning Goals.

## **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children's awareness of people, places and things outside their own experience is well promoted.
- Effective links are made between different areas of learning to make learning more meaningful and interesting.
- Children achieve well in developing their ICT skills.
- Sometimes children do not have sufficient opportunities to learn through investigation.



## Commentary

50. Most children have had few experiences outside the family home before they start in the nursery and their lack of English means that standards are well below average when they start school. Good teaching extends children's knowledge and vocabulary so that curiosity and interest about the world around them is well stimulated. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is well planned so that all the aspects of children's learning are meaningfully linked and interwoven. These natural connections build effectively on what children already know and stimulate their questions about the world around them. Teaching and learning in this aspect are good and lead to children's good achievement so by the time they enter Year 1 most have attained the expected levels in the Early Learning Goals. In the nursery children have been considering people who help them. Discussions with people they know in the school about their jobs and interests extend children's awareness and understanding well. The boys in particular showed great interest in the caretaker's tools and keys and this was used well to stimulate recording of all they could remember using drawings and word captions. Stories are often used as a stimulus for learning. 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar', for example, was used satisfactorily in reception to develop children's understanding of the life cycle of the butterfly. A science table exhibiting other mini-beasts stimulated children's interest and the use of good quality pictures extended their knowledge. The class computer is a regular part of children's free choice activities in both the nursery and the reception class. The teachers select the programs and ensure children have the skills to use them independently. In reception, for example, children were 'painting' their own butterflies using a draw program that created symmetrical pictures. Free choice activities reflect the topic being taught but there are too few opportunities for children to investigate for themselves or try things out so extending their experiences.

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- A good range of activities promotes children's fine control when using simple tools and writing implements.
- Easy access to all types of writing materials in play activities stimulates children's desire to write and draw.
- A range of construction toys develop children's dexterity well.

## Commentary

51. Standards when children start school are broadly average in their body control, large movements when running and jumping and in their balance. Many children have not had the opportunity to use pencils, crayons and simple tools before starting school and their fine motor control has not been developed. They make good achievement in developing their control of writing and drawing implements because they are given many opportunities to use them in a wide variety of tasks in both the nursery and the reception class. Teaching and learning in this aspect are good especially in the development of early writing skills. In the nursery this takes the form of lots of drawing and the use of many types of media so that children's circular control is developed in readiness for letters and numbers. They copy the letters in their name on a daily basis

so that by the end of nursery most write the letters unaided. More formalised teaching of letter and number shapes is used satisfactorily in reception so that children are able to construct recognisable letters in their writing. No formalised physical education lessons were observed during the inspection, but simple balancing activities and the use of climbing and agility frames in the outside classroom spaces give additional opportunities to promote children's balance and mobility. Games using a variety of apparatus develop hand and eye co-ordination satisfactorily. By the end of reception children are attaining standards that are in line with those expected in the Early Learning Goals.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in creative development is **good** in the nursery and **satisfactory** overall.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- A wide range of materials and skills are used and developed in the nursery.
- Creative activities are well linked to learning in other areas.

### **Commentary**

52. Standards in their creative development are below average when they start in the nursery because children have had little opportunity to use pencils, paints and crayons and so develop these skills. In the nursery children are given many and various opportunities to experience different materials and tools to create lively and colourful pictures. They are surrounded by colour and their own pictures make the classroom a stimulating area in which to work. Music often plays as they work and musical instruments are available for children to play and experiment with. Stories stimulate children's language and they rehearse the stories adapting the events in their play. Role play areas are an important part of children's creative development in both classrooms and some children always gravitate to these areas gaining great enjoyment from their imaginative play. In reception class children are given satisfactory opportunities to make choices in their work and to consider what they like. Music sessions are a regular part of the reception class timetable but there was not the opportunity to observe one. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Children achieve well in the nursery and satisfactorily in reception class. By the time children enter Year 1 most have met the standards expected in the Early Learning Goals.

## **SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2**

### **English**

Overall provision for English is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching assistants are effectively deployed and provide effective support for individual pupils.
- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 develop good reading skills.
- ICT is not effectively harnessed to enhance learning in the subject.
- Assessment systems and monitoring of teaching and learning are not well established and used to effect improvements.

## Commentary

53. Overall standards in English are average in Years 2 and 6. They are not as good as those in the 2004 test results or the last inspection, particularly in Year 2 except for reading, because the intake of the school has changed and attainment on entry for these pupils is well below average. The school also recognises that assessment is not secure and standards in the past have not been a true reflection of pupils' attainment. Standards in Year 6 are in line with the national average overall but are affected by a high level of pupil mobility. The majority of pupils including those with special educational needs, those with English as an additional language and those from ethnic minority backgrounds make satisfactory progress by the time they leave school. Higher attaining pupils do not achieve satisfactorily especially in Year 6 as few achieve the higher levels. This is due mainly to weaknesses in assessment and insufficient monitoring of pupils' progress to ensure that those who fall short of or exceed expectations are identified and given satisfactory support. The current Year 6 has also experienced many changes in teachers in the last few years and although they have had a more stable time this year it has affected their progress.
54. Standards in speaking and listening are average. Pupils listen well during lessons and are attentive. Many respond well to teachers' questioning but in many instances pupils are not fully engaged and some remain passive because teaching is not sufficiently focused on promoting talk, with few opportunities for pupils to discuss in pairs or groups and insufficient exemplification of how learning can be harnessed through talk. Pupils achieve well in reading: better than in other skills. Many develop strategies for reading unfamiliar words and use the context to guess meaning. More able pupils express clear preferences and justify their choice of books or authors. Regular opportunities are provided to develop pupils' library skills and extend their learning. Guided reading is used well and is effectively assessed against clear objectives although insufficient diagnostic information is recorded to set targets for improvement. Although pupils are exposed to a good range of non-fiction texts, research skills are insufficiently promoted. Sources of information in books and ICT are not used sufficiently to seek information and interpret it in different contexts.
55. A good range of writing of different types is covered over time but there is little emphasis on extended writing. There is also insufficient emphasis on providing examples of how to develop writing and many pupils only complete short pieces. The quality of handwriting and presentation is variable. Boys have not achieved as well as the girls in English, especially in writing over the past three years. This has been recognised by the school but strategies to improve their achievement have not been consistently promoted.
56. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Good emphasis is given to developing a range of reading strategies, especially in Years 1 and 2. Some good examples were seen during the week of inspection of support for pupils with English as an additional language but this is inconsistent. Speaking and listening are not sufficiently promoted. Marking of pupils' work is sound but weaknesses are not consistently used to target improvement. Some of the teachers are not fully familiar with the requirements of the National Literacy Strategy and have not developed a good repertoire of methods to impact positively on pupils' progress, especially that of the higher attainers. Opportunities to use ICT skills in lessons are not systematically planned with missed opportunities for pupils to use it for drafting and redrafting.

57. The subject is satisfactorily led and managed. The subject leader is committed and has clear ideas for developing the subject further. She has begun to establish a portfolio of work assessed at different levels to support teachers' accuracy in assessing levels of attainment. However, monitoring of teaching and learning is underdeveloped to enable her to form an accurate view of standards and identify where interventions are needed. Progress since the last inspection is unsatisfactory mainly because of staff turnover and changes in the pupil intake. However, under the headteacher's leadership, many of the issues highlighted have been identified by the school and plans are in place to implement them.

### **Literacy across the curriculum**

58. The use of literacy skills is not sufficiently planned across the curriculum. Pupils' literacy skills are not effectively promoted in other subjects with only a few examples in history and geography where the content of both subjects have been used in literacy lessons. There are insufficient knowledge and skills among the staff to plan for opportunities in a systematic way including emphasis on teaching and rehearsing subject vocabulary, for instance in science. Better practice is in evidence in pupils' writing in religious education where they often write prayers and use a diary to note their reflections.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Some good teaching is raising standards in mathematics.
- Teaching assistants support learning well, especially for pupils of lower abilities and those with special educational needs.
- Marking and assessments are not used sufficiently to help pupils know how to improve.
- Pupils have limited opportunities to develop their mathematical skills in other subjects.

### **Commentary**

59. Achievement is satisfactory overall and standards are average in Year 2 and Year 6. This is similar to the findings at the last inspection. Assessments in 2004 said that standards in Year 2 were well above average. However, the school recognises that these were inaccurate and the evidence on inspection supports this. Therefore the judgements regarding lack of progress by pupils through the school cannot be secure. Evidence from the scrutiny of work and observations of lessons shows that pupils make satisfactory progress through the school. The school expects to meet the standards expected nationally this year. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher levels is in line with the national picture at age 7 and 11. There has been significant disruption in the school through staff changes and high pupil mobility. There is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls. Pupils with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress.
60. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Teachers plan their work based on national guidance and ensure that the teaching assistants are informed about the role they will take in the lesson. Some good teaching was observed. In these lessons teachers try to engage the pupils and make learning fun. These lessons

are characterised by careful preparation and the use of the interactive whiteboards to enable pupils to learn well. For example, in one lesson the teacher used a program to enable pupils to learn how to use a protractor and practise their learning using the program on the board. Materials for the other pupils were focused on their levels of understanding, ensuring the level of challenge was sufficient for their abilities. Good use of the teaching assistants to support learning ensures that all pupils are included and those with special educational needs or who have English as an additional language are able to be included fully and make satisfactory progress. Good teachers have high expectations and refer to the planned learning during the plenary sessions. However, the school does not make sufficient allowance for the wide range of abilities in the introductory and plenary sessions in the lessons and so questions do not sufficiently challenge the full range of abilities in the class.

61. Pupils have good attitudes to the subject. They set their work out neatly and this supports their understanding of key concepts such as place value in number processing. When the teaching is good pupils apply themselves well to their work. However, the marking and assessment of work are not consistent or secure enough to enable the pupils to know how well they have done or what they need to do to improve. Pupils do not follow up comments made by teachers in exercise books, nor do they do corrections. Teachers do not set targets for pupils in mathematics.
62. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The subject leader has been in post for three years but it is only in the last few terms that she has been empowered to fulfil the role. The new headteacher has given her a clear understanding of what she needs to do. She is aware that there are a number of activities that she needs to undertake and has begun to do some monitoring of teaching and learning with the headteacher. In addition she has begun to analyse the outcomes of tests and assessments and is using them to identify the aspects of the subject that pupils find most difficult. Samples of children's class work are monitored but not sufficiently frequently to ensure that children are making consistently good progress.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

63. Mathematics is not planned across the curriculum and is unsatisfactory overall. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to use and develop the skills and knowledge that they have acquired in mathematics lessons in other subjects. Although there is limited evidence of the use of data collection and measurement in science, teachers do not systematically identify opportunities for children to use and develop mathematical skills in other subjects.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils show interest and involvement in their activities.
- The computer interactive whiteboards are being used well to introduce new ideas and concepts.
- There is insufficient focus on developing pupils' investigative skills.
- Information from assessment is not used to identify what pupils need to learn next.
- Higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged.

## Commentary

64. Pupils achieve satisfactorily through the school. Standards at the end of Year 2 are average. Most pupils attain the expected standard of Level 2, but there are fewer pupils attaining the higher standard of Level 3 than is found nationally. Pupils who are in the early stages of learning English as an additional language make good achievement to attain average standards as they are still finding difficulties in understanding general vocabulary as well as new scientific terms. By the end of Year 6 standards are below average. There are fewer pupils attaining the higher standard of Level 5 than is average and a greater number are not yet securely attaining Level 4 than is usual. Most pupils are achieving satisfactorily to attain these standards but not the potentially higher attaining pupils. They are not sufficiently challenged and their learning is not sufficiently extended. Standards in Year 2 and in Year 6 are similar to those found at the previous inspection. Standards are not as high as those attained in the 2004 National Curriculum tests, however. This is partly because teacher assessment was not secure, especially in Year 2, and each cohort of pupils has its own difficulties in terms of the proportion of pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language. There have also been many staff changes in recent years especially in Key Stage 2 and not all teachers are confident in teaching to the higher levels in science.
65. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. In the best lessons teachers have secure levels of subject knowledge and are able to explain new ideas and concepts well. Pupils enjoy their activities are well motivated to learn. Some classes have the computerised interactive whiteboards and benefit from the use of slides and videos that give clear representation of difficult concepts. In Years 3 and 5, for example, the teachers used an effective diagrammatic representation of how the earth travels around the sun so creating day and night. The video clip was used differently in the two classes so that it was relevant to the pupils' understanding and effectively extended their understanding. In future years teachers will need to plan the use of such clips carefully so that pupils are not repeating the same work. Most teachers have high expectations for pupils' good behaviour and attention to which pupils respond well. Relationships are good and pupils want to do well. The weakness in teaching is the lack of opportunities for pupils to investigate for themselves and learn through direct experience. This makes it more difficult for them to connect aspects of their knowledge and expound their own predictions and theories. In a lesson seen in Year 6, for example, pupils were looking at the different factors that have an impact on how quickly solids dissolve in water. They had a good understanding of solutions and the process of dissolving, but their lack of experience of planning their own tests made it difficult for them to understanding how they could manage the different variables.
66. Teachers satisfactorily monitor pupils' learning and understanding at the end of each unit of work. The information is not sufficiently used, however, to identify those pupils who are capable of higher standards and to provide them with more challenging tasks. Too often higher attaining pupils are not challenged to use what they know. The tasks are not matched to pupils' capabilities except in terms of their knowledge of English and not according to their scientific understanding.
67. Leadership and management are satisfactory but the role of the co-ordinator is underdeveloped. Standards in science are now being tracked so that their progress is monitored and underachievement identified. This was introduced by the new headteacher and the co-ordinator has not as yet been able to make much use of this data as she is on maternity leave. Teaching and learning are being monitored by the

headteacher but this is also fairly new and so the co-ordinator has not developed a secure understanding of strengths and weaknesses in standards, teaching or learning.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Provision has improved but this has not yet had sufficient impact on pupils' standards or achievement.
- The range and quality of resources have been improved substantially this year.

### **Commentary**

68. Standards in Year 2 are broadly average but standards are below average at the age of 11. The main reason for this is that it is only in the last year that the school has made satisfactory provision for ICT with a computer suite and the acquisition of interactive whiteboards. Pupils in Years 3-6 have not covered some of the key areas of learning. The school has begun to address this and this has enabled the pupils in Year 2 to catch up on work missed earlier, but there has been insufficient time for the older pupils to cover the amount required. Achievement by Year 6 is therefore also unsatisfactory. This represents unsatisfactory improvement since the time of the last inspection when standards were judged to be in line with national expectations.
69. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory. Pupils' work indicates that most staff have satisfactory subject expertise. They also have access to advice and guidance when they are unsure about their own expertise. The school is using national guidelines to ensure that it will be able to cover all aspects of the National Curriculum. In the lessons observed the teaching was mostly satisfactory and in some lessons it was good. Good lessons were well paced, engaged the pupils in developing their expertise with the computer and made good links to work being done in other subjects. Relationships were good, with pupils sharing their ideas and taking turns with their partners when working on the same machine. They are keen to learn and experiment. In one lesson observed pupils in Year 2 worked well together on a 'logo' program, using their knowledge of measurements and geometry to create a route for the turtle on the screen. The balance of activities in lessons is satisfactory and it enables pupils to assess how well they have done at the end of the lesson.
70. The subject is led and managed satisfactorily. The coordinator has been the post holder for less than two terms but has already identified the strengths and weaknesses of the subject, gaps in software and opportunities to develop the subject much further. She has plans to develop a portfolio of assessed work so that teachers have a clear idea about standards that pupils should reach. No systematic monitoring of teaching and learning has taken place to check for good practice which can be shared and to identify areas of weakness that need to be improved.

### **Information and communication technology across the curriculum**

71. The use of ICT is not sufficiently planned across the curriculum. Its use to support learning in other subjects is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. There are good examples of pupils exploring fonts and colours, learning how to combine text and graphics, use the Internet for research and paint and design in the style of artists. It is unsatisfactory in

Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 where pupils have not had the opportunities to use ICT to support their work. Interactive whiteboards have been installed in two classrooms as well as the suite and the teachers in these classes use them whenever possible to enrich their teaching in other subjects. They were used to make a mathematics lesson on angles particularly effective and pupils know how to access the programs using the touch sensitive properties. The school has plans to extend this provision to other classes.

## HUMANITIES

**Religious education** is subject to a Section 23 inspection because St Joseph's is a Voluntary Aided Roman Catholic school.

72. Only one **geography** lesson but no **history** lessons were observed during the inspection so no overall judgements can be made on provision. However, scrutiny of work, discussion with subject leaders and analysis of planning shows that the national / required curriculum is in place for both subjects. Pupils are taught both history and geography in units throughout the year. Both subjects have sufficient resources. All pupils have the opportunities to develop their understanding through visits to museums, the rich resources provided by the area close to the school and residential weeks for Year 6, as well as through the use of speakers who visit the school. Standards of work seen are in line with those expected nationally. However, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop their range of writing skills in history and geography. Furthermore, the school has not yet put in place a programme that will ensure that pupils' skills in these subjects are developed and assessed rigorously.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

73. **Art and design, design and technology, music and physical education** were not areas of focus for the inspection and were only sampled. From discussion with staff, however, it is evident that in all four subjects there is insufficient assessment on how pupils' knowledge and skills are developing. Where assessments are made the information is not consistently passed on to the next teacher so that pupils' learning progresses effectively. Subject leaders are enthusiastic about promoting their subjects but have had insufficient training or time to monitor pupils' work or teaching. They do not therefore have a secure hold on standards, teaching or learning in their subjects.
74. No lessons were observed in **art and design** and so no judgements on the provision, standards or teaching can be made. However, evidence of work around the school shows an effective introduction to a variety of skills when creating two-dimensional art work. Much of the work on display was of a good standard and was evidence of a satisfactory range of media. Pupils are introduced to a number of artists and have explored their different styles of work. The curriculum is satisfactorily planned through the school.
75. One lesson and part of another lesson were observed in **design and technology** but insufficient evidence was gathered to make secure overall judgements on the provision, standards or teaching. Evidence of pupils' work around the school shows a satisfactory range of knowledge and skills being taught. Pupils in Year 3, for example, used pneumatics to make their large fun monsters move and in Year 4 pupils have been evaluating a variety of commercially produced purses and wallets in preparation of designing their own. Design and technology is satisfactorily linked to other subjects. Pupils in Year 1, for example, designed and made their own fruit salad as part of



learning about keeping healthy. The curriculum for design and technology is satisfactorily planned through the school.

76. Although only one lesson was seen in **music**, enough evidence was gathered from documentation and in discussion with the subject leader and the headteacher to establish that the subject does not meet the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum. It is not planned and taught to Years 4, 5 and 6. In the lesson seen, effective emphasis was given to rehearsing and producing an ensemble piece. Pupils showed good skills in developing their sense of rhythm, using untuned and tuned instruments. However, they were not given enough opportunity to evaluate their work. Provision is strengthened by regular sessions of hymn singing and lessons of the recorder for small groups of pupils from Year 2 to 6.
77. In **physical education**, in the lessons seen, younger pupils show sound skills as they use a story as a stimulus for their dance, mimicking the movements of animals and the central character. A number of pupils show good skills as they produce imaginative movements and link these together effectively at the end of the lesson. However, without a music stimulus quite a few find this challenging. In addition, not enough use is made of teacher demonstration and opportunities for pupils to evaluate their work.
78. The subject is enhanced through coaching provided by external qualified staff with both boys' and girls' teams being prepared to take part in matches against a neighbouring school. The quality of the coaching is very good and the pupils make good progress in these sessions.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP**

79. No lessons were seen in this area of the school's work and so no judgments are made about overall provision. The programme for personal and social education is linked with religious education and plays a critical role in reinforcing the distinctive ethos of the school. The school meets statutory requirements in respect of its provision of sex, relationships and drugs education. Healthy living is effectively promoted through discussion in science lessons, general discussions and by providing younger pupils with fruits and vegetables at break times. There is no formal procedure for promoting pupils' awareness of citizenship. Class rules and discussions in lessons focus pupils' attention on how people need to work together in a community but at present there is no school council through which pupils can influence and improve the life of the school.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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