

# INSPECTION REPORT

**ST LUKE'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Heywood

LEA area: Rochdale

Unique reference number: 105805

Headteacher: Mr Peter Baddeley

Lead inspector: Ms Margot D'Arcy

Dates of inspection: 25<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> April 2005

Inspection number: 267849

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 controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	210
School address:	Queens Park Road Heywood Lancashire
Postcode:	OL10 4XB
Telephone number:	(01706) 369 443
Fax number:	(01706) 620 191
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Rev Geoff Turner
Date of previous inspection:	November 1998

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

This is an average-sized primary school. Most pupils are of white British heritage. There is a small number of Asian pupils of whom all are fluent speakers of English. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is below the national average, but the proportion with severe learning difficulties is above. The range of pupils' needs includes: moderate learning difficulties; profound and multiple difficulties; speech and communication difficulties and physical disabilities. Whilst the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is broadly average, this does not fully reflect the area in which the school is situated, which suffers from some economic and social disadvantages. Children's attainment when they begin school is well below that expected for their age. The number of pupils joining and leaving the school other than at the usual admission and transfer times is broadly average, but was unusually high for a group of Year 6 pupils who took the national tests in 2004. The school has gained a number of awards, including: the Activemark, a Healthy Schools' Award and a government achievement award in 2003.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
23158	Ms Margot D'Arcy	Lead inspector	The Foundation Stage English as an additional language Science Art and design Music
9929	Mr Alan Dobson	Lay inspector	
10229	Ms Susan Russam	Team inspector	Special educational needs English Design and technology History
11528	Mr Michael Wainwright	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Geography Physical education Religious education

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **good** school, with strengths in many areas. Despite past difficulties with staffing having had some adverse effect on pupils' achievement, this is satisfactory overall. A more secure staffing situation this year is paying off, with the current rate of learning being good. There is good teaching in all year groups, but there are weaknesses in the teaching of writing and science. The school is highly effective in promoting pupils' personal development. It is led and managed well and provides **good** value for money.

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

- The headteacher leads and manages the school effectively. He values all pupils equally and works tirelessly to ensure that all are included in everything the school provides.
- High quality teaching for reception children gives them a very good start to their education.
- The overall quality of teaching in Years 1 to 6 is good, with support staff making a very valuable contribution.
- Weaknesses in provision for creative writing in Years 1 to 4 and for science in Year 2 limit pupils' achievement.
- Subject co-ordinators are not sufficiently involved in monitoring their areas of responsibility.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to school and behave very well.
- An excellent range of additional opportunities enriches the curriculum.
- Information and communication technology (ICT) is used very well to support planning, teaching and learning.
- The school takes very good care of pupils, listens to their views and promotes their personal qualities extremely well.
- Very good links with parents and outside support services add much to the school's provision.
- An effective team of governors provides the school with good support.

The school has made **satisfactory** improvement since the last inspection. The recommendation to better promote pupils' cultural development through the arts has been successfully addressed. Standards are not as high as they were, but the headteacher has worked hard to minimise the disruptions to achievement caused by staffing issues and things are now back on track. Many positive aspects of the school's provision found in the last inspection have been maintained or improved.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Pupils achieve **satisfactorily** overall. The table shows significant fluctuation in Year 6 test results over time, but results in relation to similar schools in 2004, and in earlier years, show mostly satisfactory achievement. The current good rate of learning bodes well for improved standards in the future, although in Years 3 and 4 pupils are not achieving as well as they could in creative writing. Inspection evidence found the standards of the current Year 6 group to be broadly average

in English and science and above average in mathematics. Given their earlier attainment at the end of Year 2, their progress has been satisfactory overall and good in mathematics. Year 2 test results have also fluctuated sharply. Those attained in 2004, and for a number of years prior to this, reflect overall satisfactory achievement through Years 1 and 2. The current Year 2 pupils are attaining above average standards in reading and some aspects of writing, and average standards in mathematics. They are underachieving, however, in science. There is also some underachievement in creative writing for pupils in Years 1 and 2. Reception children achieve very well. From a low baseline many reach the expected goals in reading, writing and mathematics. Their standards of personal and social development are also very well developed. Throughout the school, pupils achieve well in ICT. Standards in religious education (RE) are in line with expectations by the end of Year 6 and reflect satisfactory achievement. There is no significant difference between the achievement of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well.

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **very good**. Their personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is also **very good**. Attendance is satisfactory, but holidays in term time are a significant cause of absence. Punctuality is good.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The overall quality of education is **good**. Teaching is **good** overall, with a quarter being very good or excellent. There are some weaknesses in the teaching of creative writing in Years 1 to 4 and science in Year 2. Teachers use ICT very well to help plan lessons and they make good use of assessment information to match work to pupils' abilities. Support staff make a very good contribution, particularly for pupils with special educational needs. The school provides a good curriculum, enhanced by a wide variety of additional opportunities. Accommodation and resources are good. Very good attention is paid to pupils' welfare and safety and there are very good links with parents. The school values and includes all pupils and makes very good provision to seek and act upon their views.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The overall quality of leadership and management is **good**. The headteacher provides good leadership. He inspires a strong commitment to inclusion and promoting pupils' all round development. There is good dedication from senior staff, but some aspects of their roles are underdeveloped so that they have limited impact on standards and provision across the school. Governance is good. Governors are committed and work hard to support the school. They meet all of their legal obligations.

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

Parents hold the school, and the headteacher in particular, in high regard. They have no significant concerns. Discussions with pupils and the results from questionnaires completed by them showed that they are also very happy with their school.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Raise standards in science by the end of Year 2.
- Improve the provision for creative writing in Years 1 to 4 and the presentation of pupils' work.
- Involve subject and other co-ordinators more in monitoring standards and provision, particularly in English and mathematics.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

#### **Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects**

By the time they reach the end of Year 6, pupils have achieved satisfactorily. Standards are broadly average in most subjects. There are no significant differences between the achievement of boys and girls or those from minority ethnic groups.

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

- Reception children achieve very well.
- Throughout the school, pupils are making good strides in reading.
- Pupils in Years 1 to 4 are not achieving as well as they could in creative writing.
- Year 2 pupils underachieve in science.
- In ICT and RE good teaching is boosting pupils' achievement.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well.

#### **Commentary**

1. There is a range of attainment on entry but, overall, when children begin school their standards in communication, language and literacy are well below those expected for their age. In mathematical development they are very low. In the other four areas of learning<sup>1</sup>, standards are below expectations on starting school. During their first year in school, children make very good progress in response to high quality teaching and stimulating learning experiences. By the end of the year, many attain the expected goals for reading, writing and mathematics. Speaking skills remain slightly below average, but progress in this aspect is, nevertheless, very good. Children also achieve very well in their personal, social and emotional development so that by the end of the year, standards are above expectations. There was insufficient evidence to make secure, overall, judgements about standards and achievement in knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development. However, in the music element of creative development, the children achieve very well and exceed the expected goals.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	14.7 (16.8)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	14.3 (15.9)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	15.3 (16.8)	16.2 (16.3)

*There were 30 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

2. When compared to schools nationally and in similar contexts, Year 2 pupils' test results in 2004 were well below average in reading and mathematics and below average in writing. The results represented a significant fall from those achieved in 2003 but this was due to a high proportion of pupils in the year group with special educational needs. Inspection evidence confirms this. In the five previous years, results have generally fluctuated between being above or in line with the national average. Given the standards achieved by children at the end of the Reception Year, and accepting a variation in attainment for different year groups, past results have reflected generally satisfactory progress in these subjects during Years 1 and 2.

<sup>1</sup> Personal, social and emotional development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development; and creative development.

- The current Year 2 pupils are attaining above average standards in reading and writing and broadly average standards in mathematics. Given their attainment at the end of the Reception Year, these standards reflect overall satisfactory progress during Years 1 and 2. However, inspection evidence showed some variation in achievement in English. In both Years 1 and 2 pupils are progressing well in reading and, in daily literacy lessons they are also making good gains in grasping technical aspects of writing, such as planning, drafting, grammar and punctuation. However, in creative writing, progress is limited and sometimes unsatisfactory because this aspect is not taught well enough. Inspection evidence shows that pupils' standards in science are below expectations by the end of Year 2; experimental and investigative skills are especially weak. Pupils' work shows good progress during Year 1 but unsatisfactory progress in Year 2. This variation is linked to the quality of teaching.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.0 (25.3)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	27.2 (27.6)	27.0 (26.8)
science	28.2 (27.4)	28.6 (28.6)

*There were 31 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

- In 2004, Year 6 pupils' test results were in line with the national average and those of similar schools in English and mathematics, but below in science. Results in all three subjects reflected good improvement on those achieved in 2003. However, over time, results have been erratic, fluctuating up and down sharply, making trends difficult to establish. A number of factors, including varying proportions of pupils with special educational needs and levels of mobility<sup>2</sup>, have influenced results. However, staffing difficulties, particularly for older juniors, have also been significant. Inspection evidence shows that stability is now being established through a more settled staffing structure. Whilst pupils' overall rate of progress through Years 3 to 6 has not been better than satisfactory, their current rate of learning is good in response to good quality teaching.
- Inspection evidence shows that Year 6 pupils' standards in English and science are broadly average and in mathematics they are above. There are some weaknesses in the development of creative writing, but this is only in Years 3 and 4; this aspect is being developed well in Years 5 and 6. In a number of year groups, however, presentation in English and other subjects is not as good as it should be. In mathematics, junior pupils are achieving well. There is particularly good promotion of calculation skills, but investigative work could be given a higher profile in some year groups. In science, progress is satisfactory overall, although here too, a greater focus on investigative work would improve standards and achievement.
- By the end of Years 2 and 6, standards in ICT are in line with national expectations. However, pupils are making good progress in response to the significant emphasis that is placed on the development of ICT skills and its use across the curriculum. In RE, standards by the end of Year 6 are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Over time, pupils have achieved satisfactorily in this subject, but current good teaching from the co-ordinator to all year groups is giving a boost to learning. It was not possible to make secure judgements about standards and achievement in other subjects. However, in music, it was clear that by the end of Year 2, pupils have achieved well and attained above average standards.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well. Often pupils with statements achieve very well because of the very good quality additional help that they receive from support staff.

<sup>2</sup> A term used to describe pupils entering and leaving the school other than at the normal admission and transfer times.

Individual education plans indicate that pupils make good progress in relation to their prior attainments.

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

Pupils have very positive attitudes to school and behave very well. Their personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is very good. Attendance is satisfactory. Punctuality is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils enjoy school and have very positive attitudes to learning.
- Pupils' very good behaviour and relationships with staff and each other have a particularly positive impact on their learning.
- There are good procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance.
- Holidays in term time are a significant cause of absence.

### **Commentary**

8. In lessons, pupils of all ages show enthusiasm for learning. They are keen to talk about what they have learned and try hard. However, presentation of work is not always as good as it could be. Homework is taken seriously, as are the additional opportunities the school provides for pupils to prepare for the national tests. A very high number of pupils of all ages participate in school clubs and the other activities provided outside of lessons.
9. The school is a very orderly environment supported by rules that pupils consider to be fair. Pupils behave very well in lessons and playtimes are friendly, social, occasions where pupils feel safe. Pupils do not consider bullying or name calling to be issues and this was evident from results of the research undertaken by the school council. Pupils express complete confidence in the ability of staff to quickly sort out any problems. There have been no exclusions in recent years.
10. Pupils are polite and friendly, in part due to the good role models set by staff. This results in very good relationships, which in turn create an environment where pupils try their best and are willing to 'have a go'. They readily volunteer to answer demanding questions or demonstrate a newly acquired skill without fear of embarrassment if they do not get it quite right. The very good relationships between pupils are clearly seen in the way that they take turns, listen to each other and help classmates who may be struggling. Pupils are particularly tolerant of each other's differences and demonstrate highly mature levels of care and concern, especially towards pupils who are wheelchair users.
11. Pupils have good opportunities to learn about their own and others' cultures. The provision for and standards in this element of their personal development have improved since the last inspection. Better opportunities have been included in the art and music curriculum to study and appreciate the work of artists and musicians reflecting a range of cultural traditions. Older pupils are given opportunities to debate sensitive issues, such as racial discrimination. However, limited opportunities are available for pupils to gain first-hand experiences of visiting places of worship other than Christian churches. Nevertheless, in other aspects of their personal development pupils benefit greatly from the school's very good provision. Assembly time is particularly effective in promoting spiritual awareness, with good opportunities for pupils to share prayer and reflect. During these times, the exceptionally caring ethos of the school is almost tangible. The very inclusive nature of the school underpins the extremely high levels of respect that pupils show for the feelings, values and beliefs of others.

### **Attendance**

12. The school has an efficient computerised system for registering and monitoring attendance. Pupils with poor attendance are targeted for special attention. The school does not approve of parents taking children out of school to go on holiday, but this is a significant cause of absence. In the autumn term of 2004, for example, holidays accounted for over a quarter of all absences. Absences are noted on pupils' annual reports, but high levels of absence are not commented upon strongly enough to discourage repetition.

**Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)**

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.9	School data	0.1
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

**QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

The school provides pupils with a good quality of education.

**Teaching and learning**

The overall quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- A new staffing structure is having a positive impact on teaching and learning.
- Teaching in Reception is very good.
- ICT is used very well to support lesson planning and delivery.
- Whilst there are strengths in the teaching of all three of the core subjects<sup>3</sup>, some elements could be improved.
- Support staff make a very good contribution to teaching and learning, particularly for pupils with special educational needs.
- Overall, information from a good range of assessment procedures is used effectively to promote learning, but there are weaknesses in marking.

**Commentary**

**Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 28 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
2	6	12	6	2	0	0

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

13. The table above shows the quality of teaching seen throughout the school during the inspection. Recent reorganisation of staffing in Years 1 to 6, including a number of new appointments, is having a positive impact on learning, with good teaching seen by class teachers in all year groups. There are significant strengths in the teaching of reception children. Specialist teaching in RE and music is having a beneficial effect on learning, as is the use of the English and mathematics co-ordinators to teach their subjects to all pupils in Years 5 and 6. Whilst there is good teaching of science in many year groups, in Year 2 the teaching of this subject is unsatisfactory. In Years 1 to 4, there are some weaknesses in the teaching of creative writing. Where lessons and pupils' work were judged to be unsatisfactory,

<sup>3</sup> English, mathematics and science.

key features were teachers' limited subject knowledge and their insufficiently high expectations of pupils.

14. Teachers' planning is good overall. Particularly effective use is made of ICT to support the setting of learning objectives and to determine how work will be different or moderated to suit pupils' abilities. Occasionally, however, support teachers who take specific lessons, such as extended writing or science, do not produce detailed or clear enough lesson plans. This limitation is then reflected in the quality of teaching and learning, which is sometimes unsatisfactory. Across the school, linked ICT systems allow teachers to share and exchange ideas and make use of instantly available screens to provide demonstrations of skills and strategies. ICT is taught well and usefully planned into many lessons.
15. Overall, there is good teaching of English and mathematics. Across the curriculum, pupils are given regular and interesting opportunities to develop skills in speaking and reading. Research tasks using ICT support reading skills well. Literacy lessons are taught well, with the technical skills of writing being promoted effectively by class teachers. Most mathematics lessons are characterised by a good pace, sharp questioning and good involvement of pupils, for example, in explaining strategies. Although the need for pupils to use and apply mathematics is appropriately planned into the curriculum, in lessons, teachers do not always provide enough work of this nature. A similar situation exists in science. Evidence of good science teaching was seen in many year groups, but whilst experimental and investigative skills are being promoted satisfactorily overall, there is scope for this aspect to receive a higher profile.
16. Lesson planning generally takes good account of assessment information, but occasionally, teachers miss opportunities within lessons to set pupils further challenges when it is clear that they have quickly grasped the work set. Some particularly good marking was seen in Years 1, 2 and 4, but overall this aspect of assessment is inconsistent in its use and effectiveness. In many cases, marking does not give pupils sufficient guidance about how they can improve, for example, by setting them short-term targets.
17. Some particularly effective aspects of teaching include teachers' very good relationships with pupils and the use and impact of support staff. The very good rapport that teachers have with pupils motivates them to pay good attention and try their best. The school's good number of trained support staff make a very good contribution to teaching and learning. They are well briefed, understand their roles and use initiative. Frequently they are involved in very successful teaching of small groups and contribute well to planning and assessment.
18. There is high quality teaching in the Reception class. The teacher's high expectations and very good awareness of how young children learn results in them making very good progress. Planning includes lots of play and practical work and frequent reinforcement of basic skills. Work is linked through a theme so that children make meaningful connections between learning in different areas. The classroom assistant makes a very good contribution to all aspects of teaching.
19. Pupils with special educational needs are taught well. Learning support assistants make a very positive contribution, for example, they are instrumental in ensuring that targets in individual education plans are the focus of pupils' learning. They keep good records of the progress made and share this information regularly with class teachers so that new and more challenging targets can be set. However, teachers do not always ensure that this information informs planning in subjects other than literacy and numeracy. Whilst pupils with special educational needs are very well included in lessons, there are times when the demands made by pupils with complex needs disrupts the learning of others.
20. There are a wide range of procedures to measure pupils' attainment and progress, particularly in English and mathematics. Religious education is the only subject in which there is no formal assessment, but this is currently under review. Assessment data is used well to make forecasts about pupils' future attainment, measure progress, set targets and determine where

additional support or challenge might be needed. A limitation, however, has been the lack of focus on the value added from the end of Reception to the end of Year 2.

## **The curriculum**

There is a good curriculum for all pupils, with an excellent range of opportunities for enrichment. Resources and accommodation are both good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Very good use is made of ICT to plan the curriculum.
- The school is highly committed to inclusion, but it does not have the expertise to meet some pupils' particularly complex needs.
- There is an excellent range of additional opportunities to support learning.
- Good use is made of the school environment and local area to enhance learning experiences.

### **Commentary**

21. The school provides a good curriculum which pupils find interesting and enjoyable. Particularly effective use is made of ICT to plan the curriculum. Across each year, units of work in all subjects are thoughtfully organised and logged onto the school's internal ICT-based system, to which teachers have instant access through their classroom computers. This provides them with significant support when planning lessons. Moreover, when linked with the same accessibility to individual pupils' assessments, the system allows the planning of work that is suitably matched to pupils' different abilities.
22. The school shows great dedication to ensuring that all pupils have access to the learning experiences provided. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and for those with statements it is very good. Great care is taken to ensure that these pupils are included in all learning opportunities alongside their classmates. This extends to those with physical disabilities being as fully included in PE lessons as possible. Despite its commitment, however, the school is not able to meet the needs of every pupil with a statement. Occasionally, because of a lack of expertise within the school, pupils are not given appropriate learning opportunities at a suitable level for their age and complexity of needs.
23. There is a wealth of additional opportunities to enrich the curriculum. Pupils' recent experiences include workshops in various aspects of dance, including experts from the English National Ballet, drama and sculpture. Visits have also been made to support learning in history, geography, science and physical education (PE). A wide range of additional opportunities is provided for pupils from Reception to Year 6 at lunchtimes and after school. These include numerous sports, board games, cyber café, cross-stitch, DVD club and gardening. Many teachers and other adults volunteer their own time to provide these.
24. Despite the limitations of a cramped ICT/library area, the accommodation is good and used fully to support learning. Much thought has been given to the development and use of the spacious and attractive grounds. These provide further learning experiences in, for example geography and science, such as when pupils compare contrasting types of woodland and learn about the habitats of animals and mini-beasts. Resources in school are good. The significant investments made in ICT, learning support staff and special educational needs are having a positive impact on the quality of provision.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils receive a very high level of care in a safe and very friendly environment.
- Pupils' personal development is promoted very well, but the work of the school council could be organised better to promote responsibility.
- There are very good procedures for checking and acting on pupils' views.

### **Commentary**

25. The school is a very friendly and caring community based firmly on strong Christian principles. The headteacher and staff know all pupils very well, which underpins very good relationships and mutual respect. Child protection procedures are well embedded and health and safety matters are treated very seriously. First aid cover is good.
26. The school is very good at supporting pupils with anxieties and concerns. The opportunity in daily assemblies for pupils to request a prayer when they have a concern is used very well and handled sensitively. Pupils value greatly this procedure, which is highly effective in helping them to share a burden. Pupils and their families are so well known to staff, and particularly to the headteacher, that support and guidance in personal matters is based very firmly on a thorough appreciation of each pupil's personal circumstances. This creates a high level of confidence from pupils and parents about any advice and guidance given. Formal guidance on academic matters is less evident. Older pupils are clear about what they need to do to improve in English, but procedures are less well developed in other subjects. Targets in pupils' reports are often too general to be really useful.
27. Pupils have a very effective say in the running of the school. The school regularly uses questionnaires to sample pupils' opinions. A recent example targeted pupils in Years 5 and 6, seeking their views about literacy and numeracy lessons. More general views are sought annually from Year 4 upwards, with pupils' opinions being considered in future planning.
28. The school council allows pupils to be involved in decision making, for instance deciding on how money raised for charity is spent. The council recently undertook a very valuable survey, which confirmed that name-calling is not a significant problem. However there are some missed opportunities for pupils to develop further their experiences, for instance, by pupils appointing specific post holders (such as a regular Chair), having more frequent meetings, and taking greater responsibility for the running of the council.

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

Links with parents are very good. Those with the community and other schools are good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents have an extremely high opinion of the school.
- Parents are kept very well informed.
- The school has excellent procedures to seek parents' views and involve them in school life.
- Links with other schools are particularly effective in promoting pupils' sporting skills.

### **Commentary**

29. Parents are extremely pleased with the school. They particularly like the way it is run, the extent to which they are encouraged to be involved, the quality of the teaching and the high expectations of staff.
30. At the beginning of each term, parents are informed about what is going to be taught. Overall, there is a very good level of detail in these plans, allowing parents to be actively involved in their children's learning. Pupils' reports are of good quality overall and contain very useful information on the National Curriculum levels each pupil is achieving in the main subjects, allowing parents to monitor their children's progress. The use of a computerised bank of

statements impersonalises reports somewhat and many of the targets are too general. The school's web site is a very good source of useful information for parents and is easy to navigate.

31. Parents show good interest in their children's education, with a very high level of attendance at termly parents' meetings. The school follows up the few parents who may miss a meeting to ensure that all are kept abreast of their children's progress and made aware of any concerns. The school is very keen to involve parents in future developments. Questionnaires are used to monitor opinion and recently parents were involved with staff and governors on future planning. One outcome of this consultation was the need for more feedback on homework and this is being addressed. Parents have also been involved in discussions about providing an additional entrance into the school. The very easy accessibility of the headteacher and staff to parents ensures that any concerns or grievances are dealt with speedily.
32. Good community links include strong links with the parish church of St Luke's, involvement in community festivals and performing at a local supermarket for town residents at Christmas time. The school has extensive sporting links with other local schools through leagues and regular tournaments. These effectively ensure the development of sporting skills, the building of team spirit and an introduction to the pressures of a competitive world.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership, management and governance are good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher has a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and is at the heart of the very strong commitment to inclusion.
- The headteacher rightly takes a leading role in monitoring, but more of this could be delegated to co-ordinators, particularly in English and mathematics.
- Good use is made of ICT in management tasks, such as monitoring planning and checking on pupils' progress.
- A committed governing body provides the school with good support.

### **Commentary**

33. The headteacher has a very high profile in the school and leads and manages it well. He has a clear understanding of what the school does well and where improvements are needed. Expectations of pupils and staff are high. The headteacher's tremendous dedication to promoting the school's inclusive nature and pupils' self-esteem and all round development has rightly earned him the trust of parents. They see him as totally approachable and committed to the well-being of their children. Staff and pupils respect and like him and warm to his good sense of humour.
34. In recent years the headteacher has worked hard to minimise the disruption to pupils' learning caused by staffing issues. His efforts have recently met with good success in the formulation of a more secure staffing situation. Reorganisation and new appointments in the past year are working well overall, as evidenced by the good quality of teaching and learning seen during this inspection. The fairly small number of teachers, including two who are newly qualified, means that some subjects do not currently have a co-ordinator to lead and manage provision. However, appointments are in hand and in the meantime the headteacher is satisfactorily overseeing provision in these areas.
35. As well as having quite a significant teaching commitment and taking a leading role in promoting the use of ICT to support teaching and learning, the headteacher is highly involved in monitoring the school's work. This includes checking on teachers' planning, assessments, pupils' work and teaching quality. Whilst, overall, this has led to the identification of the right priorities for improvement, the headteacher's time is often spread very thinly and some key

monitoring tasks could easily be shared more with co-ordinators, particularly those for English and mathematics. These individuals are good role models for teaching their subjects and form part of the senior management team. However, whilst their responsibilities include analysing assessment data, they are not involved enough in checking on standards, achievement and provision throughout the school. Consequently, their insight of these matters, particularly in the infants (as they are both based in the juniors) is limited. Other co-ordinators could also be more usefully involved in this aspect of their role.

36. Provision for reception children is led and managed well. The teacher in charge is very experienced and has kept up to date with changes to the curriculum and assessment requirements. The impact of her work is very evident in the very good quality of provision for these children and their very good achievement.
37. Leadership and management of special educational needs are satisfactory. The responsibility of day-to-day support for these pupils is mostly delegated to support staff. Periodically the co-ordinator monitors the quality and effectiveness of provision. However, whilst individual education plans are reviewed regularly, there are no mechanisms to track pupils at different stages on the special educational needs register. The level of resources for these pupils is generous and, overall, efficiently allocated. The school's very commendable commitment to inclusion is clearly evident in its truly dedicated efforts to provide for the significant number of pupils with special needs, particularly those with statements.
38. The school's improvement plan is a lengthy document. The significant detail provided sometimes obscures key ideas, but overall, it identifies the correct areas for improvement. A significant aid to the management of the school is the advanced computerised system that allows all teachers, co-ordinators and the headteacher easy access to every pupil's records and to the lessons that are planned and taught.
39. Governors are an effective team. They are closely involved with the school and have a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. They keenly monitor the school's work and, in their role as a critical friend, challenge it to improve and account for its performance. Governors are key players in shaping the school's development.

## Financial information

### *Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004*

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	639,113	Balance from previous year	7,300
Total expenditure	631,914	Balance carried forward to the next year	14,519
Expenditure per pupil	3,043		

40. Financial management is good. The school is vigilant in monitoring its finances and using them to best effect for the benefit of pupils.

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

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

Direct teaching was seen in the areas of communication, language and literacy, mathematics and music. The provision for children's personal, social and emotional development was evident in these lessons and in many other contexts. No direct teaching was seen in the other three areas, but evidence of what children do was gained by: looking at their work and attainment profiles; curriculum and lesson planning; and photographs of activities undertaken in the past year.

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

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

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

- The children achieve very well in response to very good teaching.
- Behaviour is very good.
- Very good relationships with staff promote children's confidence and enjoyment of school.

#### **Commentary**

41. Children are achieving very well in this area. By the end of the year standards are above expectations, with most children attaining the expected goals. This reflects the very good teaching and high expectations of staff. The children are helped to develop a good sense of right and wrong and, in response, behaviour is very good. Social skills are well developed and continuously promoted so that children learn to take turns and consider others. The children show very good enjoyment of school and have adjusted very well to routines and expectations, such as attending assemblies with older pupils. The very good relationships engendered by the staff help children to feel secure and give them confidence, for example, to answer questions. Skills of independence are continuously encouraged resulting in the children being able to make some choices about their work and conducting simple jobs responsibly.

### **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

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

- Children have a very good knowledge of letter sounds and make very good attempts at writing independently.
- Children's underdeveloped speaking skills on beginning school are promoted very well across the curriculum.

#### **Commentary**

42. Children make very good progress. From a low starting point many achieve the expected goals in reading and writing by the end of the year. Although progress is also very good in speaking and listening, standards in this element are still slightly below expectations. Children's very good achievement results from high quality teaching. For example, excellent teaching in a shared writing session developed children's understanding of how stories are structured, promoted creative thinking, and reinforced spelling and punctuation skills extremely well. It is clear that the children have gained a very good grasp of key writing skills. During the session, they corrected the teacher's deliberate mistakes in direction, use of full stops and capital letters and spaces between words. The children's very good knowledge and

use of letter sounds was evident in their determined attempts to spell unfamiliar words from a sentence that they had constructed collectively. This was also seen in a shared reading session, where many children were able to pick out words within words, such as 'is', 'on' and 'and'. They identified rhyming words by sound and also by similarities in spelling, such as 'lunch' and 'munch'.

43. Children have very good attitudes to reading and writing. They listen well to stories and are keen to comment on the illustrations and content. They are gaining a very good awareness of the differences between fiction and non-fiction and know that authors write books and illustrators create the pictures.
44. Children's very good interest in lessons across the curriculum results in them listening carefully when required. They make appropriate responses to adults and each other, but their basic vocabulary is fairly limited; sentences are not lengthy or complex. The teacher and support assistant intervene frequently to extend what the children say and regularly ask them to explain themselves further when, for example, they answer questions or express views. This is having a very positive impact on promoting speaking skills, which for many are significantly underdeveloped when they begin school.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Number skills are developed especially well through very good teaching.
- Mathematical ideas are promoted very well across the curriculum.

### **Commentary**

45. From a very low starting point, children make very good progress. By the end of the year a good proportion attain the goals expected for their age. This is due to very good teaching, exemplified by high expectations and a thorough understanding of how young children learn. Counting skills are taught and reinforced daily. Most children count easily to 20 and around half make very good attempts at counting well beyond, for instance to 100. Children's recognition of numerals is being developed very well through, for example, games where they identify hidden numbers on a hundred-square. Lots of practical work, both planned and incidental, ensures that the children really understand the value of numbers. Key ideas about early addition and subtraction are strengthened in such activities; for example, when the children attempt to blow out five candles on a birthday cake, their attention is drawn to the different ways (number of blows) that can be used to make five.
46. The children develop their understanding of other mathematical ideas such as shape, space and measure in a range of activities, including art work, model construction and scientific investigations. During the inspection, the latter was used very effectively by the teacher to promote children's understanding of the days of the week and their use of mathematical vocabulary; for example, when they were required to compare the size and length of caterpillars at different stages of growth.

## **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD, PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT AND CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

47. It was only possible to see direct teaching of music. Here, excellent teaching from a specialist, who visits weekly, results in the children achieving very well and reaching standards that exceed the goals expected for their age. The teacher's very secure subject knowledge and excellent rapport with the children underpin their very good learning. During the lesson, the children were able to demonstrate very good awareness of rhythm and pitch when using chime-bars, their voices and body percussion, such as clapping. Novel methods, utilising

puppets, ensured that the children watched carefully and responded well to signals about when to begin and stop performing. Puppets were also used very well to introduce the children to the idea of standard notation. In assemblies, the children sing enthusiastically and quite tunefully, remembering the words and actions to many songs.

48. There are many activities and displays that promote children's knowledge and understanding of the world. Computers are regularly in use, supporting skills in literacy and numeracy alongside those in ICT. Children are familiar with a variety of programs and show good control when handling the mouse. Displays of natural and made materials encourage early scientific skills of observation, description and comparison. During the inspection, the children were learning about the different stages of growth of a caterpillar; from egg to butterfly. Here, live exhibits and daily opportunities for the children to talk about and record the changes they noticed totally captivated them and resulted in very meaningful learning.
49. In outdoor sessions, the children showed confidence and appropriate control over their body movements when, for example, climbing or pedalling wheeled toys. A weekly swimming lesson supports physical development and children's confidence in the water. In class, the children have appropriate opportunities to gain dexterity through, for example, writing, painting, cutting and modelling.
50. Children's creativity was evident when they engaged in pretend play in the garden centre and home corner and when they were painting and model making. They showed a good awareness of how to join materials, for example, with sticky tape and glue. Artwork shows children's developing appreciation of form; for example with their drawings and paintings of people and objects increasing in complexity through the year.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

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

- Reading is taught well and pupils' speaking and listening skills are promoted effectively.
- In Years 1 to 4 creative writing is not taught well enough and not enough is done to extend pupils' writing skills across the curriculum.
- The co-ordinator is an effective leader and manager but is not sufficiently aware of the standards and provision in Years 1 to 4.

#### **Commentary**

51. Pupils are making good progress in speaking and listening and standards are above average by the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils are enthusiastic and confident to join in discussions and keen to articulate their views and opinions. In lessons, good opportunities are included for them to engage in dialogue with classmates. Teachers make good use of the National Literacy Strategy framework. This results in pupils being afforded regular opportunities for role-play, drama and making oral presentations to a range of audiences. For example, Year 5 pupils collaborated well in a debate about racial discrimination. Throughout the school, pupils' listening skills are good. They listen carefully to staff and to each other and respond appropriately.
52. The provision for reading is well planned and managed. Throughout the school, a consistent teaching approach ensures that pupils make good progress and achieve good standards. Pupils have regular and varied opportunities to read across all subjects and receive good quality guided teaching of reading skills in small groups. There is additional, well-targeted, support for the lowest attainers, which provides them with confidence and various strategies to help tackle unfamiliar words. In relation to their age, the highest attaining pupils read very

fluently and with good understanding. In Year 2, for example, records show that some pupils avidly read texts that are very challenging for their age. Pupils readily discuss authors and their preferred choice of reading material. Average attainers throughout the school frequently achieve better standards in reading than writing. This is partly because in shared reading sessions they are given appealing material that interests them. Another reason is that skills associated with reading, such as the use of text for research, are promoted well in other subjects.

53. Writing is the weakest area in terms of standards and provision. The school has recognised the need to improve pupils' creative writing and allocated additional lessons to the daily literacy hour to promote this aspect. In Years 5 and 6, provision is at its best because the skilled and knowledgeable subject co-ordinator provides good teaching in all aspects of writing to both year groups. In Years 1 to 4, provision varies. Pupils are taught the structure of composition, planning, drafting and punctuation well during daily literacy lessons, but creative writing lessons are not effective enough in raising standards. Pupils' skills in writing at length or in developing writing through drafting, editing or using powerful vocabulary are not as well developed as they could be. Moreover, throughout the school, the good opportunities that exist for writing to be reinforced through recording in other subjects, such as history, geography and RE are not being adequately exploited. The quality of the presentation of pupils' written work is satisfactory overall, but in several classes pupils take inadequate care with their work and the quality of their handwriting falls below expectations.
54. Teaching is good overall. During the inspection a significant number of lessons were taught very well, but occasionally teaching was unsatisfactory. Weaknesses were linked to too slow a pace, insufficiently high expectations and work that did not meet the needs of pupils of different abilities, particularly higher attainers. The result was that pupils were not enabled to make the progress of which they were capable. In the most effective lessons, questions and written work challenged all. Pupils' interest was maintained by teachers' brisk pace, a good range of methods and clear explanations and expectations.
55. The co-ordinator has, in a short time, established a satisfactory overview of the subject and, through her teaching, is particularly informed about the standards and achievement of pupils in Years 5 and 6. She is able to access the planning for and assessment results of all year groups, but recognises the need to have a more precise focus when monitoring standards, teaching and learning throughout the school. In particular, the co-ordinator is aware that she is insufficiently involved in monitoring these aspects in all infant year groups. Other, well founded priorities for improvement include: how well teachers mark work; the guidance and encouragement pupils are given to produce work of high quality; and the accuracy with which teachers assess and track pupils' progress.

### **Language and literacy across the curriculum**

56. Although writing across the curriculum is a weakness there are good opportunities for pupils to use reading and discussion skills in other subjects. Teachers are also effective in providing good opportunities for pupils to develop the knowledge and understanding of technical vocabulary within a range of subjects. Displays in classrooms help pupils recall subject specific vocabulary, for example, in mathematics, science, design and technology and history.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' progress is monitored closely so that the work planned for them is suitably challenging.
- Teaching and learning are good, but marking rarely gives guidance for improvement.
- There are insufficient regular opportunities for pupils to investigate.
- In Years 4 to 6 mental calculation skills are good.
- The co-ordinator is a good role model for teaching mathematics, but is insufficiently involved in monitoring standards and provision in Years 1 and 2.

## **Commentary**

57. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve satisfactorily and reach broadly average standards by the end of Year 2. During Years 3 to 6, achievement is good resulting in above average standards by the end of Year 6.
58. By the end of Year 2, pupils have gained a good understanding of mathematical vocabulary. This allows them to interpret word problems and apply the correct operations to solve them. From Year 1 upwards, pupils show increasing confidence in their use of numbers and understanding of place value. For example, about half of Year 4 correctly calculate  $473 + 249$  mentally. Some then proceed to skilfully add pairs of four-figure numbers in their heads. Year 5 pupils confidently round numbers to the nearest 100 and 1,000 and round decimal numbers, such as 41.693. By Year 6, many pupils gain high scores in mental calculation tests using prime and triangular numbers.
59. Pupils' growing confidence and ability with numbers reflects good teaching throughout the school. Extensive assessments inform teaching so that suitably challenging work is planned for pupils of all abilities. Where necessary, additional small groups are formed to boost the learning of pupils who need it. Work is marked conscientiously and praise is given, but with little reference to how pupils might improve. A notable exception is Year 4 where marking makes some extremely helpful comments to aid pupils' progress.
60. Lessons are planned well and show teachers' high expectations of behaviour and application to work. Learning proceeds at a good pace, with content and methods ensuring pupils' interest and understanding. Questioning is sharp and teachers encourage all pupils to contribute orally. Learning objectives are shared with pupils so that they know the purpose of the work set, but occasionally opportunities are missed to check that they know what they have achieved by the end of the lesson. Whilst there are many good features of teaching, opportunities for pupils to use and apply mathematics in problem solving are limited, particularly in some junior year groups. Some good practice was seen in Year 6 but, in general, pupils are not being set sufficient problems that require them to hypothesise, investigate and express conclusions. Generally pupils apply themselves well. Their good attitudes to work are significantly influenced by the very good relationships with teachers and other adults who help them.
61. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic, has very good subject knowledge and provides a good role model in his teaching. Very clear records are maintained and pupils' progress is tracked and checked closely. However he is insufficiently involved in checking on standards and the quality of teaching and learning in the infants. This restricts his knowledge of the school's overall quality of provision and means that foci for improvement are not as sharply defined as they could be.

## **Mathematics across the curriculum**

62. The promotion of mathematics across the curriculum is satisfactory overall. Some good links are made with ICT, for example, when pupils work with databases, spreadsheets and graphs. In science and design and technology, pupils are involved in various measuring activities. For

instance, Year 5 pupils constructed some good graphs in science to record the results of investigations into the temperature of ice as it melted. Pupils' understanding of shape and pattern is promoted satisfactorily through work that they do in art and design.

## SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Year 1 pupils make good progress but in Year 2, pupils are not attaining as well as they should.
- There is good teaching in a number of year groups, but marking could be better, as could the way pupils present their work.

### Commentary

63. There has been some decline in Year 6 pupils' national test results standards since the last inspection, with staffing issues playing some part in this. Currently, the school is without a science co-ordinator. The headteacher is overseeing the subject until the new co-ordinator is appointed in September. The headteacher is aware of the need to raise standards. Monitoring has shown up some weaknesses, particularly in Year 2 where the headteacher and inspectors noted very little recorded work of any quality for the year.
64. During Year 1, pupils build well on what they have learned in Reception. Scientific vocabulary is promoted effectively and pupils engage in a good range of investigative work. Overall, the quality of recording is good, with opportunities for higher attainers to show their more advanced knowledge and skills. Recording tasks make a useful contribution to the development of writing skills. Marking is good, offering the right balance between praise and pointers for improvement. There is unsatisfactory teaching in Year 2. The teacher's subject knowledge is insecure and expectations of what pupils should achieve are not high enough. Although by the end of Year 2, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of areas such as living things, materials, forces and physical processes, their skills in scientific investigation are weak. Few have any understanding of the idea of fair testing, and recording skills are underdeveloped. Work is not marked well.
65. By the end of Year 6, pupils have achieved satisfactorily and attain broadly average standards. Pupils cover an appropriate range of work, including a satisfactory variety of experimental and investigative tasks. Their knowledge of fair testing is secure. During a lesson on changing materials, pupils used their knowledge to suggest how investigations linked to the idea of separation of solids from liquids might be conducted. The quality of work and progress in Years 3 to 5 varies, particularly in relation to the development of investigative skills, but is satisfactory overall. There is some good evidence of rising standards in Years 4 and 5, but in Year 3, standards are weak, with limited progress having been made during the year due to staffing disruptions. Very recent work in this year group is of much better quality and suggests that some good teaching is now taking place.
66. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory, with some good teaching evident in Years 1, 4, 5 and 6. Overall, pupils pay good attention in lessons and behave well. This is because teachers work hard to provide interesting content, have very good relationships with pupils and high expectations of their behaviour. Marking varies and could be usefully improved to include more pointers to help pupils do better. Presentation is also variable; expectations of this are not always high enough.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The provision and use of resources is very good.
- Pupils are eager learners and apply themselves very well.
- Good use is made of ICT to support learning in other subjects.
- Teachers do not have enough guidance to help them assess pupils' standards.

## **Commentary**

67. The school fully embraces technology and provides a wealth of resources to support teaching and learning. All classrooms have interactive screens allowing pupils to see instant examples of text and graphics to support work in a variety of subjects. In specific ICT lessons, teachers give good, whole class demonstrations that prepare pupils well for the work they will complete individually. The large number of desktop computers means that most pupils have individual access to computers. Consequently, whilst standards by the end of Years 2 and 6 are currently in line with what is expected for pupils' ages, they are rising at a good rate. Pupils are achieving well. They show great confidence in using technology, share resources fairly and support each other well when necessary.
68. Only two specific ICT lessons were seen, but in most lessons ICT was well planned and used to support teaching and learning experiences. In both of the ICT lessons, teachers' good subject knowledge was evident; they presented the tasks confidently, giving clear examples. Pupils found the work interesting and so applied themselves well. Teaching assistants gave good support so that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, were fully included. As well as promoting ICT skills well, both lessons supported the work that pupils were covering in science. For example, Year 2 pupils researched information about mini-beasts, importing pictures of these and typing captions to go with them. In Year 6, pupils used logging devices to collect information about pulse rates and used the computers to produce graphs of the data. They were able to suggest some advantages over using non-digital equipment to collect the same information.
69. The subject has a very high profile in school. Pupils are seen at computers before school begins and at lunchtimes, working on tasks of their own choice. An interesting whole school project involves all pupils compiling and producing a personal DVD. Some class productions of these are used in assemblies, providing very appropriate and often moving visual stimuli for the themes being addressed. Various after-school ICT clubs are very well attended. Although the school makes the best use it can of the central computer area, it is far from ideal and becomes extremely hot during the day.
70. The school has begun to collate a portfolio of examples of pupils' work to aid assessment. However, due to the long-term absence of the co-ordinator, progress on this has been curtailed. Much of the work has not been assessed so teachers do not have enough guidance to assist them in deciding whether pupils are attaining appropriate levels for their age.

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

71. All pupils have individual folders, which show effective use of ICT to support learning in a range of subjects. For example, work on spreadsheets is well linked to learning in mathematics and Year 2 pupils produce word-processed accounts about their study of the Isle of Struay in geography. Year 2 pupils make effective use of art programs to produce impressions of sunsets and of the skyline during the Great Fire of London, supporting work in both art and design and history.

## **HUMANITIES**

### **History and Geography**

Work in history and geography was sampled so no judgements are made about provision, standards or achievement.

72. In **geography**, no lessons were seen and pupils' books contained very little recorded work. Discussions with a small group of Year 6 pupils showed their knowledge of the subject to be very sparse. Currently, the subject does not have a co-ordinator. The headteacher has monitored planning and pupils' books and pointed out the limitations of recorded work. A new co-ordinator will be appointed from the school's staff in September.
73. No lessons were seen in **history**, but evidence from planning and pupils' work shows mostly satisfactory coverage of the curriculum. However, the quantity and quality of pupils' work is limited, with missed opportunities to promote writing skills. Pupils in Year 2 have produced the best range and variety of work. They have learned about Florence Nightingale and her legacy to the medical profession. In discussion, these pupils could readily compare and contrast pictures of street scenes now and at the time of the Great Fire of London. Older pupils study different eras of British history, including the Romans, as well as aspects of European and world history such as the Egyptians and Aztecs. Overall, teachers do not mark pupils' work well enough and pupils capable of producing higher standards of work are not presented with sufficiently challenging tasks. Too often pupils are given worksheets to complete, consisting of a few words or phrases and the colouring of illustrations.

### **Religious education**

Provision in religious education is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good teaching is boosting pupils progress.
- Interesting learning experiences are planned, but more use could be made of visits and visitors to support pupils' understanding of religions other than Christianity.
- The subject is led and managed well.

### **Commentary**

74. No lessons were seen in Years 1 and 2 and there was insufficient recorded work to support judgements about standards and achievement. By the end of Year 6, pupils attain standards in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils show secure knowledge of aspects of Christianity and begin to develop an understanding of similarities and differences between Christianity and other major world faiths. They make links, for example, between the Ten Commandments and the Five Pillars of Islam. Over time, pupils have achieved satisfactorily, but current learning is good in response to good teaching.
75. The subject co-ordinator is very committed and teaches all classes in Years 1 to 6. An interesting lesson was planned for Year 6 pupils who watched a video about aspects of the Islamic faith. Afterwards they asked questions of a Muslim visitor. During this the teacher interjected appropriately and ensured that the lesson maintained pace and interest. Pupils were polite and attentive, showing much interest in the articles of clothing that were modelled.
76. The curriculum is planned well so that pupils' learning of their own Christian faith is supported with insights into Islam and Judaism. Pupils' books reflect an interesting approach, with not just factual information recorded. For instance, Year 3 pupils write their 'Thoughts about God' and Year 6 relate the story of the Prodigal Son to the idea of 'forgiveness' and their own life experiences. The subject makes a particularly good contribution to pupils' personal development. This is very evident in daily assemblies where many pupils are comfortable in asking for special prayers.

77. A collection of suitable resources is being built. There are good links with the local parish church, but not enough use is made of visitors from other faiths and pupils have not visited any non-Christian places of worship, such as a mosque.

## **CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS**

Work in **art and design**, **design and technology** and **physical education** was sampled so no judgements are made about provision, standards or achievement. **Music** was also sampled. Whilst there was insufficient evidence to make a secure, overall, judgement about provision, or about standards and achievement in this subject by the end of Year 6, it was possible to judge standards and achievement by the end of Year 2.

78. Since the last inspection, there have been some significant improvements made to the provision for **music**, with the curriculum now including a greater emphasis on music from various cultures. The school also buys in specialist teaching for all year groups. Lessons seen in the infants show that pupils achieve well and reach standards that are above expectations by the end of Year 2. Pupils have a good understanding of technical vocabulary, such as pitch, tempo, piano and forte. Teaching is very good. The teacher's excellent subject knowledge and varied use of methods keeps most pupils interested and attentive. For instance, Year 2 pupils were exploring a wide range of instruments, including violins and organs, as well as their voices, to make scary sounds for a montage depicting a 'spooky scene'. Evaluative skills were promoted well in this work. The lesson seen in Year 6 was taught well, but its focus (evaluating the emotive impact of music) was too limited to allow a secure, overall judgement to be made about standards. However, pupils showed a satisfactory insight into how music evokes different feelings and responses from a listener, for example, of suspense, sadness and joy.
79. Singing skills, noted as satisfactory by the last inspection, were not represented well in this inspection. In assemblies, pupils from Reception to Year 4 joined in enthusiastically, but there was noticeable reticence from Years 5 and 6. The overall quality of singing on these occasions was barely satisfactory. Although it was not possible to see singing being taught, the specialist teachers do cover this aspect, but there is insufficient follow-up at other times. In assemblies, for instance, no teaching or learning points were made, other than in urging pupils to 'sing up'. The practice of teachers not remaining in class when specialists take lessons is not unacceptable, but there is some negative impact in leaving the teaching of this subject entirely to visiting teachers. Principally, basic skills, particularly in singing, are not being reinforced sufficiently by the school's staff, so performance diminishes. Occasionally, too, some pupils do not behave quite as well as they would with their class teachers. Whilst the specialist teachers manage behaviour well, in a 30 minute session even minor disturbances reduce learning time.
80. No **art and design** lessons were seen but evidence from planning and pupils' work shows that an appropriate range of activities are provided to promote the development of skills, knowledge and understanding. During the inspection, Year 1 pupils made some good clay models of monsters, using shaping, joining, pinching and marking techniques effectively. Year 2 pupils have used various techniques, including collage and sewing to produce colourful representations of fish. The aquarium theme is evident in other year groups depicting compositions with paint and textiles, such as the patchwork fish in Year 6, and links with design and technology to produce three-dimensional work. Some effective links are made with ICT, such as the repeating patterns by Year 4 pupils using photographs of fish. Since the last inspection, the curriculum has more planned opportunities for pupils to study artwork and design from non-European cultures.
81. No **design and technology** lessons were taught during the inspection and there was a limited range of pupils' work displayed throughout the school. However, pupils who are in the subject co-ordinator's class have produced a good range of work of a standard expected for their age. These Year 2 pupils have designed and made a variety of wheeled vehicles. Finished models show pupils have competently used various methods for assembling, joining and combining

materials and components to produce models of cars, vans and other forms of transport. These pupils have also incorporated the use of winding mechanisms in a further range of products on display. Work in progress and initial designs show pupils using appropriate vocabulary in their planning. However, there was less evidence of how pupils evaluated the end result or how they could improve their work.

82. No **physical education** lessons were seen. Swimming records show standards by the end of Year 6 to be above those expected, with around 90 per cent of pupils achieving the basic 25 metres and many swimming well beyond this distance. It is evident from the excellent variety of extra-curricular activities, including a residential visit incorporating sports activities, that the subject has a high profile in school. Year 6 pupils talk enthusiastically about the opportunities provided and their knowledge of basic skills reflects well on the quality of teaching.

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

83. Provision in **personal, social and health education** was sampled. Sex education is taught as a discrete subject as well as forming part of the science curriculum. The school nurse is involved in this and, along with the headteacher, also gives attention to life-saving skills. The Rotary life caravan also visits the school, providing, for example, learning experiences about the dangers of drug misuse. All classes have a weekly circle time where personal issues are shared.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

