

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ST PETER'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Hazel Grove

LEA Area: Stockport

Unique Reference Number: 106125

Acting headteacher: Miss Clare Downing

Lead inspector: Mr D Byrne

Dates of inspection: 19<sup>th</sup> - 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2005

Inspection number: 267924

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



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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school: Primary  
School category: Voluntary Aided  
Age range of pupils: 4 - 11  
Gender of pupils: Mixed  
Number on roll: 259

School address: Carisbrooke Avenue  
Hazel Grove  
Stockport

Postcode: SK7 5PL

Telephone number: 0161 483 2431  
Fax number: 0161 456 9332

Appropriate authority: Governing body  
Name of chair of Mrs Maria Walker  
governors:

Date of previous 5<sup>th</sup> July 1999  
inspection:

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

This is a Voluntary Aided Catholic primary school that educates 259 boys and girls from reception to Year 6. The attainment on entry is above average. Virtually all pupils are from White British backgrounds with a very small percentage who are not. Three pupils require support for English as an additional language. There are two pupils from Traveller backgrounds. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is below the national average. The percentage of pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need, however, is above average for primary schools nationally. Eligibility for free school meals is well below the national average. The school population is relatively stable in terms of pupil mobility. There have been some recent staff changes resulting in the deputy temporarily acting as headteacher. A new headteacher takes up post in May 2005.



## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
28076	Mr D Byrne	Lead inspector	Science, design and technology, information and communication technology, physical education, personal, social and health education and citizenship.
9981	Mr S Hussain	Lay inspector	
21547	Mrs P White	Team inspector	Foundation Stage curriculum, English, Italian, art and design, music,
24052	Mr T Taylor	Team inspector	Mathematics, geography, history, special educational needs.

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **OVERALL EVALUATION**

This is a **good** school providing a good quality of education within a strong Christian ethos. Good leadership by the acting headteacher and key staff, effectively supported by the governing body, ensures that pupils achieve well. Teaching is good and pupils develop very good attitudes, behave very well and form very good relationships with others. The school gives good value for money.

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

- Good teaching and learning result in pupils achieving well academically whilst also developing very good attitudes and behaviour and good levels of personal development.
- A stimulating curriculum, very well enriched by additional activities, inspires pupils to learn.
- There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- Good levels of spiritual, moral and social development are successfully achieved, but the provision for promoting pupils' understanding of the British multicultural society is unsatisfactory.
- Systems for monitoring and tracking pupils' achievement are inefficient and subject leaders and key staff do not have enough time to perform their management roles in school time.
- Pupils are not involved enough in evaluating and contributing to targets for their own improvement.
- Very good links with parents make a valuable contribution to the pupils' education.
- Effective management by the acting headteacher and governing body has maintained a strong Christian ethos throughout the school.

The improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory. The nature of the school has changed significantly with a fall in numbers and changes in staffing in Years 3 to 6. Standards have improved in information and communication technology and in aspects of mathematics and science, but standards in writing have not improved as fast as they should. Successful innovations have improved the curriculum and increased the relevance of the pupils' lessons. The quality of assessment and its use to track pupils has not developed as fast as needed to keep up with the changes in most schools. The school is in a state of transition as a result of changes in its leadership that have reduced the impact of management to being good from its previously excellent levels.

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED**

#### **Year 6 results**

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004

English	A	A	B	D
mathematics	B	A	A	C
science	C	A	B	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

Standards in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6 have been consistently above or well above the national average in recent years. Inspection evidence shows that standards are currently above average in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6 and pupils achieve well. Pupils achieve **well** overall. Recent disruptions in staffing have reduced the achievement of pupils in Years 3 to 6. The school is settling down again and inspection evidence shows that pupils are currently achieving well in Years 3 to 6. Pupils also achieve well in Years 1 and 2 and standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science are above average. In all other subjects, pupils achieve well and reach above average standards in all subjects across the school with a strength in the performing arts. Good provision for pupils with special educational needs ensures that these pupils achieve well in relation to the targets in their individual education plans. A significant factor in the good achievement in Years 1 to 6 is the good start that children have in the reception class. Although most children start school with standards that are above average, they make good progress in all areas of their learning and achieve well. Children reach the standards expected for their age by the end of their time in the Foundation Stage and a high proportion exceeds them.

Pupils have **good** levels of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development overall. The moral and social development of pupils is very good and is a key factor in the very good behaviour throughout the school and the very good attitudes and relationships. Pupils have good levels of spirituality, and very good moral and social development but their understanding of multicultural Britain is relatively weak. The very good rates of attendance and very good levels of punctuality demonstrate that pupils like coming to school.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is **good**. The quality of teaching and learning is **good** overall. Teachers and teaching assistants provide good quality teaching for pupils with special educational needs. A good curriculum is very well enriched by a very good range of extra-curricular activities. The provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is satisfactory and there is good support, advice and guidance for pupils. Very good partnerships exist with parents and the community and there are good links with other schools.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are **good** overall. The acting headteacher provides good leadership and has maintained the school's educational direction well during a time of change. The leadership of key staff is good and they are effective in their contribution to the school's development. Management is effective, including financial control. Good governance provides valuable support and contributes to the longer term development of the school. Governors ensure that the school fulfils its statutory responsibilities.

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

Parents are very supportive of the school. They are full of praise for the caring and supportive nature of the school, for the high quality of teaching and learning and for the high standards of behaviour and positive attitudes. They rate highly the way the school works with them and hold the acting headteacher and the staff in high regard. Pupils feel very involved in the school and enjoy the education it provides. Pupils feel that their views are valued and that teachers do all that they can to help and support their personal development.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of existing systems for assessing and tracking the achievement and involving pupils in planning the next steps in their learning and evaluating their progress.
- Strengthen further the impact of key staff on the school by providing, in line with the school's priorities, time to perform their role.
- Pursue strategies that improve the pupils' knowledge and understanding of other cultures.

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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

Pupils' achievement is **good** across the school. Standards are currently **above average** in English, mathematics and science at the end of both Years 2 and 6.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

#### **Commentary**

- Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well with a high proportion exceeding the expectations for their age by the end of their time in the reception class.
- In Years 1 to 6, pupils achieve well in all subjects, with a particular strength in speaking and listening, reading, mental mathematics and the acquisition of scientific knowledge.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well.
- Pupils use their skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology well in other subjects of the curriculum.

#### **Foundation Stage**

1. Achievement is good overall for the children in the reception class. Children start school with above average standards. By the time they move to Year 1 virtually all children should reach the standards expected for their age, with half of them exceeding expectations. Children's achievement is good because staff work effectively as a team. They know the children well and plan practical activities which get the best out of them. Children find learning fun.

#### **Key Stage 1**

2. In Years 1 and 2, pupils continue to do well. In 2004 pupils in Year 2 reached standards in the national tests that were well above the national average in reading writing and mathematics. Pupils do better in the tests than those in similar schools. Inspection judgements are that pupils in Years 1 to 2 achieve well and are currently reaching standards that are above the national average with a considerable number reaching standards that are well above the national average. Standards in science at the end of Year 2 are currently above average although in 2004, teachers assessed pupils' attainment to be very high thereby placing the school in the top five per cent of all schools nationally. The good achievement is because of a combination of good teaching and a curriculum that is very well enriched to bring learning alive. Good planning gives pupils many opportunities to make links between the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology. Pupils achieve well in all other subjects, although it was not possible to make a secure judgement about achievement in physical education. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and achieve well in relation to the targets in their individual education plans.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.7 (18.4)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	16.9 (17.2)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	17.6 (18.1)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 36 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

### Key Stage 2

- Assessment data and inspection findings shows that standards at the end of Year 6 are not quite as high as they were at the time of the last inspection, although there has been some improvements in aspects of English, mathematics and science. Pupils are currently reaching standards that are above average in English, mathematics and science. Pupils do particularly well in speaking and listening and reading but could improve some aspects of writing. In mathematics, pupils have very good standards of mental recall and the ability to apply their numeracy skills to new and challenging situations. Pupils have a very good knowledge and understanding of science, but standards in solving scientific investigations, whilst being above average, could be better. The rate of pupils' progress between Years 3 and 6 is good and achievement is good overall in English, mathematics and science. Assessment data, however, indicates that in 2004, the Year 6 pupils made unsatisfactory progress when their test results were compared with those achieved when the pupils were in Year 2. This apparent decline is due to the impact of staff changes on the consistency of teaching and learning in Years 3 and 4 for this cohort.
- Pupils achieve well in all other subjects and there is a particular strength in the quality of singing and performing arts. Pupils apply their literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills well in other areas of learning. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to the targets in their individual education plans.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.8 (29.4)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	28.9 (29.7)	27.0 (26.8)
science	29.7 (30.6)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 38 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

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

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good** overall, promoting amongst pupils **very good** attitudes and behaviour and **good** levels of personal development. Attendance and punctuality are **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- A strong ethos that includes a strong sense of spirituality, the development of very good social skills and a strong sense of morality results in pupils behaving very well and having very good attitudes to school.
- Pupil's knowledge and understanding of the British multicultural society are unsatisfactory.
- Very good attendance makes a significant contribution to learning.

## Commentary

5. The strong picture reported at the last inspection has been maintained. Behaviour is very good because staff have a consistent approach and pupils know what is expected of them. Rewards and sanctions are applied fairly. Secure and effective procedures for following up racism or other forms of harassment are in place. Cases of bullying are rare and, if it occurs, it is dealt with promptly by including those pupils involved. There have been no exclusions in the last year. Pupils have very good attitudes to work and to others.
6. Personal development is good. The caring ethos of the school rooted in Christian philosophy results in pupils being sensitive to the thoughts and needs of others. Pupils willingly help others during the school day and good friendships are a strong feature for most pupils that add to their pleasure in attending school. Good play facilities in the playground and a good range of extra-curricular activities, including residential educational visits, successfully promote very good social skills. Assemblies are uplifting and the strength in singing and musical performance develops amongst pupils a strong awareness of the beauty of the world and their place in it. Pupils know right from wrong, and through discussions during lessons about issues such as man's impact on the environment, they demonstrate a very good level of moral development. This is enhanced by the selfless way that pupils all work with staff and parents to raise funds for charities. Cultural development is sound. Pupils have a good appreciation of their own cultural traditions but their knowledge and understanding of the multicultural society that is Britain are unsatisfactory.

## Attendance

7. The school has made good improvement to attendance since the last inspection. Attendance is now well above average and there is hardly any unauthorised absence. Telephone calls are made home promptly regarding any unexplained absence and this is a reflection of the school's very good monitoring of absence.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	3.0	School data	0.0
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 is **good**. Teaching and learning are **good overall**. A **good** curriculum with a **very good** range of additional activities successfully enriches the pupils' education. Provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is **satisfactory** with **good** support, advice and guidance for pupils and **good** procedures for seeking the views of pupils. **Very good** partnerships exist with parents and the local community and there are **good** links with other schools.

## Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is **good** supported by **satisfactory** assessment.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have a good subject knowledge that informs well-planned lessons for pupils.
- Good teamwork between teaching assistants and teachers benefits the education of those in the Foundation Stage and pupils with special educational needs across the school.
- Well-managed use of specialist and peripatetic teachers enhances pupils' learning.
- Procedures for using assessment data to track the progress of pupils, so that support can be accurately targeted and effectively monitored, are inefficient.
- Pupils are not consistently involved in their own assessment and self-evaluation.

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 31 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	5 (16%)	20 (65%)	6 (19%)	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.*

8. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and successfully promotes very good attitudes to learning amongst pupils. Throughout the school, teaching and support staff form an effective and industrious team that works together to provide pupils with good quality care and support both in terms of their academic achievement and their personal development.
9. The very good team work is epitomised in the Foundation Stage where teaching assistants and the class teacher work tirelessly to provide children with a wide range of exciting activities devised to challenge and extend the good skills that children have when they start school. A good balance is struck between pupils making their own choices whilst also learning to follow instructions and direction as part of adult-led activities. Teaching staff place a strong emphasis on the development of children's personal, social and emotional development and this sets them up very well to learn and develop well in their other areas of learning. In Years 1 to 6, teaching staff plan and provide a good range of stimulating activities. Expectations are high for pupils to learn. Teachers have a good knowledge of the National Curriculum and this

helps pupils to develop their own subject knowledge. Teachers have high expectations that pupils will apply their good skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology. This results in most pupils seeing connections between subjects and applying their basic skills in other areas.

10. Throughout the school there are strengths in the teaching of speaking and listening skills and in encouraging pupils to apply the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology to support learning across the curriculum. Effective use of specialist teaching in information and communication technology has been responsible for boosting standards in this subject and in lifting the confidence of most teachers to use computers well in supporting learning. The decision to set Years 5 and 6 pupils in English and mathematics contributes to teachers' good ability to ensure that higher-attaining pupils are suitably challenged. A good contribution is made to the quality of pupils' learning in music by peripatetic teachers and a music specialist. A strength in teaching in all subjects is the skilful questioning that challenges and probes pupils' understanding. High standards are set for the quality of pupils' presentation, which engenders amongst pupils a good sense of pride in their work. Although pupils' work is promptly marked, there is a lack of consistency in using marking as a way of involving pupils in their own assessment and self-evaluation.
11. Good and effective teamwork between class teachers and teaching assistants makes sure that the needs of pupils with special educational needs are effectively met. Carefully constructed and monitored individual education plans guide the activities required to improve the academic performance of these pupils. Pupils with English as an additional language are given good support in lessons.
12. Assessment is satisfactory overall but some systems are inefficient in tracking and monitoring pupils' achievement and progress as they move across the school. Effective systems exist for assessing children within the Foundation Stage. In Key Stages 1 and 2, a variety of tests are taken by all pupils, and these are analysed effectively by the staff. Overall, however, the systems for monitoring and tracking pupils' achievement are cumbersome, time consuming and lacking in clarity. In the occasional lesson where pupils are involved in evaluating their own learning, there is an improvement in standards, but pupils' involvement is used inconsistently throughout the school.

## **The curriculum**

The curriculum is **good** with **very good** enrichment. The accommodation and resources are **satisfactory**.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children in the Foundation Stage benefit from a well-planned, exciting curriculum.
- In Years 1 to 6, good links are made between the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology and other subjects.



- Pupils with special educational needs benefit from good quality provision.
- The school employs very good strategies to extend and enrich the curriculum.
- Good provision for personal, social and health education and citizenship successfully extends pupils' personal development.
- Pupils benefit from access to good quality outdoor play and learning facilities, but there are some weaknesses in aspects of the indoor accommodation.

## **Commentary**

13. The good quality provision for the curriculum found at the last inspection has been maintained. A good breadth of activities is planned and provided that ensures that pupils are taught all subjects of the National Curriculum for a suitable amount of time. Whilst good attention is given to developing pupils' skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology, care is taken to establish links between all subjects and to make sure pupils have good access to the arts and sports.
14. The provision in the Foundation Stage is good. This enables children to achieve well in all areas of learning. Recent improvements in the accommodation for reception children have provided access to a well-resourced and secure outdoor area. Throughout the Foundation Stage there is a high focus on helping the children to reach good standards in their personal, social and emotional development and this positively impacts on achievement throughout the school. In Years 3 to 6, in addition to the basic National Curriculum, pupils learn a modern foreign language on a regular basis. Across the school, subjects are carefully planned using curriculum schemes that successfully ensure the steady development of knowledge and skills between the classes. Good and effective systems are being devised to strengthen the links between subjects. More can still be done but, overall, good innovation in linking subjects inspires pupils by making learning relevant to their lives and enabling them to apply their basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology. There is very good provision in lessons and extra-curricular activities to promote pupils' creativity through the performing arts. Personal, social and health education and citizenship is given a high profile in the school and this contributes positively to pupils' personal development.
15. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and makes sure that these pupils achieve well. Good quality individual work programmes are devised to meet particular needs. The curriculum for these pupils is of a good quality and ensures that pupils can build the necessary skills and knowledge systematically. Teachers and teaching assistants provide effective support. All these strengths contribute to the good achievement made by pupils with special educational needs.
16. Pupils benefit from a very good range of educational visits that are carefully selected to extend and improve their education. A good range of residential visits for older pupils in Years 5 and 6 successfully develops their social and academic skills and helps to promote confidence and self-esteem. The curriculum is enhanced by very good provision for extra-curricular activities that are enthusiastically supported by pupils across the school. The expertise of the

specialist musician and the various peripatetic musicians gives many pupils an opportunity to learn to play a wide range of musical instruments. Similarly, the expertise of sports coaches and foreign language specialists provides a wealth of skills to enhance pupils' learning.

17. The school is well staffed in terms of class teachers but the number of teaching assistants is relatively low, although the level of support for pupils with special educational needs is good. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory overall. There are strengths in the quality of the outdoor facilities for children in the Foundation Stage and for the children in Key Stages 1 and 2 to allow them access to a good variety of activities. The toilets and the flooring in parts of the school need to be upgraded to provide acceptable standards for pupils and staff.

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

Provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is **satisfactory**. The school provides **good** support, advice and guidance and has **good** procedures for seeking the views of pupils.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children are introduced to school life well and benefit from a warm and caring family ethos.
- Pupils are confident about approaching the adults at school because relationships are very good.
- Although the school is safe and secure and pupils' welfare paramount in all that the school does, some aspects of risk assessment are not always completed well enough.
- Pupils feel valued because their views are taken seriously but more could be done to involve pupils in setting their own targets for improvement.

### **Commentary**

18. Changes in staffing and some disruptions in leadership and management have led to a decline in some aspects of this part of the school's provision since the last inspection, although there still remain some strong areas. The school has a very positive family ethos, underpinned by very trusting relationships. Pupils are very confident that staff will always resolve any concerns or worries they may have, for instance, if they feel bullied. Arrangements for child protection are currently satisfactory and meet statutory requirements. Staff are vigilant and aware of the school's procedures. General health and safety risk assessments are undertaken for all school trips but formal risk assessments are not always completed for learning activities in school. Arrangements for first aid and fire procedures are good. The school takes part in several good initiatives to promote health and safety. Year 6 pupils can attend the 'Crucial Crew' programme where they learn about emergency situations and Years 5 and 6 pupils can take part in safe cycling training.

19. Teachers know pupils well and give good support, advice and guidance to all pupils. Staff give good additional support to small groups or individuals who need it. This includes good procedures for supporting pupils with special educational needs and also in supporting individuals in such areas as anger management, social skills and personal confidence. Those with English as an additional language receive good quality day-to-day support. Outside agencies, including a special educational needs teacher and therapists, make a good contribution to supporting pupils. Induction procedures are good. New children to the school are inducted gradually and sensitively. There are good opportunities for children to become familiar with the learning routines in Reception. Pupils transferring from other schools are allocated a 'buddy' to help them settle in.
20. There are many opportunities for pupils to make their views known to staff and become involved in the school. Pupils complete a questionnaire regularly and this helps staff to identify significant issues. The school council provides good chances for pupils to develop citizenship skills and learn about democracy and decision-making. It is pleasing to see that the school has taken on board pupils' ideas such as certain fundraising, 'worry boxes' and redecoration of the girls' toilets. Pupils' awareness of their own learning and how to improve is satisfactory, but opportunities are not always fully exploited. An example of this is the way that marking to involve pupils in evaluating how well they are doing and what they can do to improve, is not consistently capitalised across the school.

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

The school has **very good** links with parents and the wider community and **good** links with other schools.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents have very good opportunities to express their views to the school.
- Parents make a very good contribution to learning at school and at home.
- Very good links with the community help to enrich the curriculum.
- Good links with other schools contribute to aspects of the pupils' education and prepare them well for their next stage of their education.

### **Commentary**

21. The very good links reported at the time of the last inspection have been maintained and developed. Parents are made very welcome as partners in the education of their children. The acting headteacher and staff are very approachable and always pleased to discuss any concerns. A questionnaire is sent to parents each year and this helps to identify issues and enables parents to influence decisions about the school. The school has acted very positively regarding parents' concerns about numbers of pupils in classes in recent times.
22. Parents are well informed about the school through a detailed prospectus. Regular newsletters home are user-friendly and helpful. Information events and workshops are a strong feature and include topics such as drugs education and

how information and communication technology is taught. Pupils' annual reports are good, giving appropriate information on standards and progress. However, future learning targets are not always clearly expressed.

23. The Home School Association supports the school very well by organising many social and fundraising events. Money raised is used towards buying additional learning resources such as an interactive whiteboard (a computer based teaching tool). Many parent helpers also give their time generously to the school. For instance, they listen to readers, help in lessons and accompany pupils for swimming lessons. Parents support their children's learning at home very well by helping with homework tasks.
24. The school continues to nurture its very effective links with St Peter's Catholic Church. The priest frequently leads assembly and religious services, making a significant contribution to the pupils' personal development. The school also has close ties with the local Methodist church. Other visitors include a sports coaching group and a dance skills provider. School trips support learning very well and include museums, theatres and other places of interest. The residential trip for older pupils to Whitby includes a trip to York Minster. The school puts much back into the community and has an impressive commitment to fundraising for good causes.
25. Links with local primary schools include sports competitions for pupils and chances to attend each other's school productions. A 'curriculum day' takes place regularly for Year 5 pupils through St James's High School and includes many learning opportunities for pupils. Mechanisms for the transfer of pupils to local secondary schools are good.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership and management of the school are **good** overall. The acting headteacher provides **good** leadership and is **well** supported by key staff. The governance of the school is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The acting headteacher has maintained the good quality of education and standards despite significant staff changes within the school.
- The quality of leadership and management depends on the personal commitment of key staff, because no formal provision of time is made for them.
- Systems for using assessment data as a means of evaluating how well the school is performing are inefficient.
- A good governing body ensures that the school provides good value for money.

### **Commentary**

26. Because of recent staff changes, the quality of leadership and management is not as good as it was at the time of the last inspection. At the moment, good leadership by the acting headteacher provides a clear educational direction. As

a result of her astute and sensitive actions, the school has maintained a good ethos and good quality of education during a time of instability. A good team spirit exists amongst all staff, both teaching and non-teaching, and this successfully creates an ethos that values not only academic standards but also the personal needs of pupils and staff. The school successfully includes all pupils in school life, regardless of ability, gender or educational need.

27. The school is well managed. Despite temporary changes in the management personnel, the impact of management on standards in the school is good overall. An effective team of key staff share essential management duties. Everyone has clear roles and responsibilities. The Foundation Stage and the provision for special educational needs are effectively managed. Even though subjects are mostly well led and managed, the subject leaders do not have enough dedicated time to perform their roles during the school day. This results in staff giving a considerable amount of their own time to manage and monitor subjects. Staff know the strengths and weaknesses of the school, but systems for analysing pupils' achievement are not as efficient as they could be, being rather cumbersome and time consuming to use. Despite this, the school manages to identify the main priorities for improvement accurately. The priorities are included in a manageable school improvement plan that guides the deployment of resources to best meet pupils' needs. Staff training and development are linked to a combination of the demands of the school coupled with individual needs. The planned training for teaching assistants is, however, relatively limited, although many teaching assistants are keen to improve their skills and attend training in their own time. Day-to-day procedures within the school are effective with a significant contribution of an efficient and hard working administrative team.
28. The school makes good use of its finances and carefully and effectively monitors the impact of spending on the quality of the pupils' education. For instance, the school has recently opted to increase the number of classes to reduce class sizes which is starting to have a positive impact on the pupils' education. The decision to spend heavily on information and communication technology and on outdoor play facilities has had a marked impact on standards. Teaching assistants are wisely deployed to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs. Despite weaknesses in some parts of the accommodation, for example, the quality of pupils' toilets, the state of some of the flooring and the quality of office accommodation for the administrators, the school makes good use of all parts of the building.

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

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	625 994	Balance from previous year	8 543
Total expenditure	617 028	Balance carried forward to the next	17 509
Expenditure per pupil	2 294		

29. The school's governors do a good job under the strong and effective leadership of the chair of governors. A small but sufficient surplus has been maintained and governors are planning strategically to deal with the impact of reduced numbers arising from a reduction in its standard admission number. Significant funds have been gained from grants to improve the quality of the outdoor accommodation. An effective committee structure enables governors to fulfil all of its statutory duties and visits by many governors help them to stay well informed about what goes on in the school and the standards being achieved.

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

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

30. Children make an effective start to their education in the reception class and achieve well in all areas of learning. Assessments completed within the first few weeks of schooling indicate that, overall, children are above average, with a significant proportion having higher than the expected levels of competency and confidence for their age in speaking and listening, physical and social skills, although attainment covers a very wide range. By the end of the reception year, almost all children attain the early learning goals and a significant number exceed expectations. There have been many good improvements in provision in the Foundation Stage since the last inspection and this is due to the effective leadership and management of the subject and very strong teamwork in the unit.
31. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall with some very good features. The children are quickly made to feel secure in the reception class and soon become engrossed in their learning as a result of very supportive relationships and a well-planned and structured environment. Adults often join in with the children's play and this helps to develop learning skills and extend understanding. Learning is organised very well to ensure that the children have covered what they should have by the time they join Year 1. All activities are planned well to promote the children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Adult-led tasks and free-choice activities are balanced well during the day. Assessment is now good, with activities taking good account of the different ability levels of the children. Good improvements since the last inspection have been the children planning their own learning, the implementation of the new assessment arrangements, and the re-designing of the outside classroom.

#### **Personal, social and emotional development**

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

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

- The children make good progress because of the very high emphasis placed on this area of learning.
- Adults' promotion of self-esteem and self-confidence, within a secure, happy learning environment, leads to very good attitudes to learning.

#### **Commentary**

32. This area of learning receives a high focus and is central to the Foundation Stage curriculum. Teaching is good and children achieve well. By the time they leave the reception class, almost all children are on course to be well above the required standards. As a result of effective induction arrangements, children

quickly settle into school life. They become engrossed in their learning as a result of very supportive relationships and a well-planned and structured environment. Teachers and teaching assistants work closely to reinforce the qualities of caring and sharing and, as a result, the behaviour of the children is very good. The good teaching contributes well to children's social and moral development. Daily routines give children a clear understanding of what is expected of them. They move quickly and quietly from whole-class sessions to self-chosen independent activities. The teacher provides a good balance of carefully planned directed activities and self-chosen ones and there is an air of harmony at all times in the classroom. Children get out and put away their toys and dress themselves independently. From the outset, children are encouraged to take responsibility, for example, taking the register to the secretary, and they are rewarded with praise for their efforts. Very good support ensures that the children with special educational needs work well alongside their classmates.

### **Communication, language and literacy development**

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

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

- There is a strong emphasis on children acquiring language skills across all areas of learning.
- The quality of the children's speaking and listening skills is very good.
- Reading and writing skills are taught systematically and well.
- There is a need for more opportunities for children to write.

#### **Commentary**

33. The children achieve well in this area of learning because of good teaching. Language flourishes across all areas of learning and, as a result, children's speaking and listening skills are very good. Well-planned activities and high-quality questioning ensure that children have frequent opportunity for discussion. For example, when children were playing in the garden, the adult supporting the activity used carefully planned questions to ask the children how they had planted strawberry seeds and what makes them grow. This contributes to children's sense of awe and wonder. Staff provide good role-models for the children, talking about what they are doing and encouraging children to do the same. For example, in a dance children were keen to identify that the music originated from the Caribbean.
34. Literacy is taught well, and well-thought-out, practical activities enable children to make good progress. By the end of their year in reception, nearly all the children are on course to achieve the expected levels and more than half will exceed them in this area of learning. Good organisation enables the teacher and teaching assistants to work productively with small groups on reading and writing activities. Children's early reading skills develop very well as they enthusiastically read books with staff. Children also receive good support at home to make progress with reading. Children develop a good knowledge of the alphabet, with over half of them using a variety of strategies to sound out



new words. Most children recognise and write their own name. The children have access to a good range of books which stimulate interest and enjoyment of the written word. Writing is promoted well across all areas of learning, with children enjoying writing labels for models they have made. However, there are too few opportunities for higher-attaining children to be challenged to write longer pieces of work. By the end of reception, most children are creating their own sentences confidently with capital letters and full stops. The higher-attaining children make a good attempt at spelling complex words while creating an interesting sentence around the book a 'Dark, Dark Tale'.

### **Mathematical development**

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The good use of practical activities and assessment ensures that children achieve well.
- The teacher and teaching assistants focus well on helping children to use mathematical language confidently.

### **Commentary**

35. The good teaching, together with the wide range of interesting tasks, ensures that the learning is good and children achieve well and make good progress. Staff monitor children well, assessing their learning regularly and making sure that their achievements are recorded. Almost all children are on course to reach the required standards and a significant number may exceed expectations. In lessons, there is a very good focus on helping children to use mathematical language confidently. In a lesson on shape, for example, the teacher carefully reinforced vocabulary such as 'circle' and 'rectangle', and helped the children to develop the vocabulary further by sequencing and drawing repeating patterns. The outdoor classroom is now used effectively for problem-solving activities, for example, when the teaching assistant encouraged the children to identify different shapes in the environment.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- A very good range of interesting and exciting activities enhances children's learning.
- The outside classroom is used effectively.

### **Commentary**

36. Teaching is good and children achieve well. Good attention is paid to making learning interesting and to involve all children. Children make good progress and nearly all are on course to reach expected standard by the end of their year in reception and over half will exceed them. A broadening of children's knowledge and understanding is achieved effectively through well-planned topics. Linked to a project on 'washing', children experiment with water, washing clothes and talk excitedly about the bubbles they have created. The outdoor classroom provides a good resource for the children to look closely at living things. For example, linked to the topic on *Jack and the Beanstalk*, children enjoyed working with parents, planting the plants that they had grown from seed. This helped the children to find out about the natural world and raised their awareness of the need to care for the environment. Teachers clearly recognise the importance of learning through investigation and regular cooking activities get the children to consider how ingredients change when they are mixed together and cooked. This practical approach helps them to develop an inquisitive attitude to learning. Cooking activities are often linked to the celebration of various religious festivals such as when children and staff created a Chinese banquet at Chinese New Year. The children's information and communication technology skills are good because computers are readily available and used effectively to support the different areas of learning. Children demonstrate how they could use the mouse confidently to draw and colour in different shapes linked to their mathematics topic. Children also enjoy working together to use a wide range of construction toys to plan and build models.

### **Physical development**

Provision in physical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children move very well with control and co-ordination, and use space well.
- Children have good skills of pencil control and form their letters accurately.
- Good quality provision contributes well to learning.

### **Commentary**

37. There is now good provision for physical development, both in the outside classroom and in the hall. This is an improvement since the last inspection. As teaching is good, the majority of the children progress well and achieve very high standards in this area of learning. In a dance lesson seen, the very good teaching encouraged children to move with very good levels of co-ordination and control and move sensitively to music. At the same time, the teacher cleverly raised pupils' awareness of the changes that happen to their bodies when they exercise. The good range of three- and four-wheeled toys has enabled children to attain good pedalling and steering skills. They demonstrate their good control and co-ordination when moving independently around the playground, showing an awareness of space for themselves and others. Children also use a good range of equipment such as brushes, scissors, paper, boxes and glue to make and decorate models skilfully. Children have developed good handwriting skills through the good teaching, which ensures

that correct letter formation is consistently modelled, and many opportunities provided to use a range of writing materials.

### **Creative development**

38. Limitations on time meant that it was not possible to make a secure judgement on the provision of all aspects of creative learning. However, the available evidence suggests that in the use of media and materials children will reach the expected levels by the time they enter Year 1, and a number will exceed these. Staff give children good opportunities to experiment with different materials such as clay, dough and sand. Children use their imagination with confidence and enjoy painting and drawing. The well-presented displays of children's own work mean that children feel that staff value their efforts. Creative activities contribute well to the children's cultural development.

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

### **ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE**

#### **Italian**

39. It was not possible to observe a lesson in Italian. Evidence from the school documentation and discussions with staff show that close links with the Italian Consulate benefit pupils in Years 3 to 6 by providing a specialist teacher who teaches each class for a set time each week.

## English

Provision in English is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average in all aspects of English, and well above in reading and speaking and listening.
- Consistently good teaching across the school promotes good achievement.
- Cross-curricular links with other subjects, and the use of literacy skills to support them, are major strengths of the provision.
- The subject benefits from strong and effective leadership and management by the co-ordinator.
- Pupils are not involved enough in setting targets for the next stage in their own learning and evaluating their progress towards them.

### Commentary

40. All pupils achieve well across the school. Standards are currently above the national average at the end of Years 2 and 6, with a large percentage of pupils at the end of Year 2 being well above the nationally expected levels. Data from the 2004 national tests for pupils at the end of Year 6 show that pupils attained standards that were above the national average. On the basis of prior attainment at the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment in comparison with similar schools is below average. This is not as good as at the time of the last inspection and is due to disruption in staffing in Years 3 to 6 for that cohort. At the end of Year 2, standards were well above the national average in reading and writing and this is an improvement since the last inspection when writing was just above. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well and make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. There is no statistically significant difference between the performance of boys and girls.
41. Skills of speaking and listening are a considerable strength of the school and contribute greatly to pupils' social development. Overall standards are very good. Pupils' language is extended by teachers' careful questioning and through opportunities to present ideas and observations to their class; for example, in Year 6 when pupils spoke very maturely about how they would present a complaint in a restaurant.
42. Standards attained in reading are high, with pupils achieving well during their time in school. Work is very well planned to include constant opportunities to read in small and whole-class groups, as well as to read with adults individually and to take books home. Good phonics teaching in the younger classes provides a solid basis for pupils to achieve well. The support of the teaching assistants working with small groups on specialist programmes contributes well to pupils' learning to read.
43. Standards in writing overall are above average across the school and in Year 2 they are well above average. The quality and variety of writing in pupils' books are good and pupils make good progress overall. In Year 6, pupils use

vocabulary confidently to create different effects and produce good, expressive writing. Although written work is often labelled with the aim for the lesson, this is not always used by pupils to review their own learning. A recent focus on using a variety of genres is having a positive impact on pupils' skills and in the range of writing undertaken. Very good writing and a wide variety of styles are evident in pupils' books in relation to their visit to Whitby.

44. Teaching and learning are always good, with very good teaching seen in Years 1, 4 and 6. These lessons were very well organised and structured, with teachers exploiting children's very good use of language to ensure that the lesson objectives were successfully achieved. All teachers have good subject knowledge, ensuring that lessons are well planned and interesting, so meeting the needs of all pupils. Speaking and reading skills are taught well. Teachers are keen to provide a structure and framework to enable pupils to achieve their best and the teaching of writing is good. Teachers constantly use praise to good effect, to raise self-esteem, maintain the very good behaviour and reinforce learning points. A strength of the teaching is skilful questioning which challenges and probes understanding. Teachers generate a pride in the finished pieces of work, presenting them well and taking great care to value pupils' contributions. Throughout the school, classrooms are rich with interactive displays and information to assist pupils with their writing. Teachers mark pupils' work conscientiously. However, written comments do not always clearly indicate ways to improve and what the next target for learning might be. Good support by teaching assistants ensures that pupils with special educational needs achieve as well as other pupils. Pupils enjoy lessons and respond with enthusiasm and energy to their teachers. Pupils are hardworking and conscientious and the majority put a lot of effort into doing their best.
45. Cross-curricular links with other subjects are very good. Literacy lessons often use visits linked to history and geography to create interest and motivate pupils. A good example of this was evident in a Year 5 and 6 geography lesson where pupils were asked to compare features of Stockport and Whitby before they visited Whitby. Pupils were encouraged to take notes during their visit to enable them to write their own diary of events. As the work was relevant to their experiences, pupils' writing was exciting and informative.
46. Good leadership and management have a positive impact on the provision and on standards. The impact of considerable staff changes in recent years has been minimised as a result, although some areas of the subject's development, for example, the involvement of all pupils in their own self-evaluation, have been held back in recent years. The subject co-ordinator is knowledgeable about the subject and has supported her colleagues well in extending the breadth of writing offered to the pupils. Good use is made of educational visits, visitors and theatre workshops and this enriches the curriculum. The provision of books in the library has improved since the last inspection and the facility was used well by Year 2 pupils during the inspection. The overall provision for English has been maintained since the last inspection but the changes in staffing did reduce standards somewhat for a time.

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

47. The use of literacy skills across the curriculum is good and is a key feature in pupils' successes and the good standards achieved. Pupils' work in many subjects shows their good use of literacy. Examples in history include using library books for research and writing. In Year 2 pupils record the difference between life now and in Victorian times. Geographical studies in Year 6 include using narrative writing skills to create a good description of the effect of erosion on the coast. Pupils use writing and reading successfully in science to describe their experiments and link literacy well with information and communication technology in many other subjects.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The good teaching meets the needs of all pupils and promotes good achievement.
- Pupils enjoy mathematics and confidently apply their numeracy skills to support learning across the curriculum.
- Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to the good achievement of pupils with special educational needs.
- Assessment is satisfactory but does not involve pupils enough.
- Leadership and management of the subject are good, although very little time is provided for them.

### **Commentary**

48. The attainment of pupils at the end of both Years 2 and 6 is above the national average. The number of pupils attaining at the higher level, in both age groups, is above the national average. Pupils achieve at the same level as pupils in similar schools. Over recent years, standards have been maintained across the school. Inspection evidence shows that standards are currently above average at the end of both Years 2 and 6. There has been a slight decline in standards compared with the last inspection. This is due to staff disruption and the reorganisation in teaching which has been necessary in recent years. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well and make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans.
49. The quality of teaching is good and is closely correlated to the good quality of learning. Teachers' planning is good and lessons are often well constructed to ensure good progress. Teachers have high expectations of pupils. They challenge them with well-crafted questions and activities, demanding their full concentration and considered responses. Levels of difficulties are progressively increased within lessons and, as a result, pupils quickly achieve success. Effective teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants ensures that pupils with special educational needs as well as lower attaining pupils are very well supported. Consequently, their high level of achievement and rate of learning match that of other pupils. The very good relationships between teachers and pupils are enhanced by judicious use of praise and encouragement. Pupils respond well by working hard, co-operating, and by displaying high levels of confidence, enthusiasm and interest in learning. Pupils enjoy lessons. They demonstrate very good instant recall in mental arithmetic and carefully use all their previously acquired knowledge and understanding when investigating and solving problems. The learning was even more effective in the classes where pupils were asked to evaluate and record their own learning against the learning objectives for the lesson. This enabled the teacher to help pupils overcome possible difficulties and to direct them to the next stage of learning. The high quality of presentation of the work in exercise books is a combination of pupils' pride and effort and the quality of teachers' marking.

However, there would be further improvement in standards if a whole school method of marking was followed. Regular homework provision and the use of information and communication technology in lessons both serve as effective tools to support pupils' learning.

50. The subject is well led and managed by a competent teacher. The subject is accurately evaluated through a variety of techniques, including analysing assessment data, but due to the recent changes in staffing and organisation of the school, the co-ordinator has had limited time within the school day to monitor and initiate development of assessment to involve pupils in their own learning. The provision for mathematics has been maintained since the last inspection.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

51. Good use is made of a variety of subjects to enable pupils to apply their good numeracy skills to new situations. As part of science investigations and in their design technology, pupils are familiar with making accurate measurements. In geography, they graph the variety of facilities in the locality, and use their good knowledge and understanding of grid references when using maps, as well as exploiting opportunities through field work to apply skills of measurement. In history, time lines are used to enable pupils to develop a good awareness of relative time. Links with information and communication technology vary from class to class but, overall, pupils are developing a good knowledge and understanding of using a variety of computer programs.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Across the school, pupils achieve very well in their knowledge and understanding of science but their skills of investigation, whilst good overall, are not as high as they could be.
- As a result of good teaching, pupils develop good attitudes to science and an inquisitive mind.
- Aspects of assessment and tracking of pupils' progress lack rigour.
- Strong leadership has maintained effective management despite a lack of dedicated time during the school day.

### **Commentary**

52. Pupils achieve well in both Years 1 and 2 and Years 3 to 6. Inspection evidence shows that by the end of Year 6 standards are well above national expectations. Pupils have a level of knowledge and understanding that is well above average for their age but pupils' skills of scientific investigation, whilst being good, are not as high as they could be. This relative weakness explains the fact that, in 2004, pupils' performance at the end of Year 6 was only in line



with the average for similar schools on the basis of entitlement to free school meals whilst being above the national average. When the 2004 results for Year 6 class are compared with those gained when the same pupils were in Year 2, statistical data indicates that the pupils did not make adequate progress in Years 3 to 6. Inspection evidence does not support this picture and indicates that in Year 3 to 6, pupils are progressing well overall. Apart from slight fluctuations, good standards have been maintained over the past five years although they are not as high as they were judged to be at the time of the last inspection. Teachers' assessment of standards at the end of Year 2 in 2004 placed the school in the top five per cent of all schools nationally. Inspection evidence shows that in the current Year 2, pupils have a very good knowledge and understanding for their age of scientific ideas and good skills of exploring science through practical activities. There is no evidence of a significant difference between the performance of boys and girls.

53. Teaching and learning are good across the school. Teachers have a particular strength in inspiring pupils to gather and absorb information. By making good use of the correct terminology, pupils steadily build up a good range of scientific vocabulary to support their learning. This allows pupils to record information accurately in their books and adds to the good quality of scientific discussions skilfully led by teachers. Pupils enjoy learning and thrive on being given challenging tasks. Pupils are good thinkers and enjoy having to work out how to do things for themselves. During a good Year 4 lesson, pupils showed great enthusiasm about the high level of challenge provided for finding the best thermal insulator to maintain the temperature of a warm drink. In so doing, they demonstrated good analytical minds as well as very good social skills in working as a team to come up with a result. Teachers expect pupils to apply both their literacy and numeracy skills to science and this adds to the quality of learning in all three subjects. The use of information and communication technology occurs satisfactorily but could be better. Although pupils are confident in planning and performing scientific experiments, this is often in response to teachers' instructions and directions and there are usually too few opportunities for pupils to apply their good skills with reasonable independence.
  
54. The subject is effectively led and managed by a skilled and knowledgeable co-ordinator. The curriculum is constantly being developed and adapted and good links are planned with other areas of learning, for example, the importance of diet as part of healthy living. Standards are carefully monitored and action taken to raise them. Good innovations are taken to enhance the curriculum, for example, by visiting local science museums and outdoor environmental centres. Although there is very little time for the co-ordinator to manage the subject, the commitment of the manager overcomes this and ensures that the subject continues to progress. Plans are currently in progress for improving the relatively weak systems for formally assessing pupils' attainment and involving pupils in this process. The provision for science has been improved since the last inspection with a revamped curriculum and better staff training and resources.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in information and communication technology is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Investments in staff training and resources are having a significant impact on raising standards across the school.
- Good leadership by the co-ordinator is improving the quality of provision and establishing information and communication technology at the heart of the curriculum.
- Pupils achieve well when using computers to support learning in many subjects but they have limited e-mail experience in school.
- Limitations of some resources reduce opportunities for some teachers to access information and communication technology fully in all lessons.

### **Commentary**

55. The good rate of improvement occurring at the time of the last inspection has continued and standards have risen as a result. Better resources, through the creation of an information and communication technology suite, effective training and support for staff and the introduction of electronic whiteboards in some classrooms, have contributed to good standards being reached at the end of both Years 2 and 6. Pupils are currently achieving well across the school. There is still more to do, particularly in equipping all classes with electronic whiteboards, but overall there has been good improvement in provision since 1999.
56. Good teaching and learning under the good guidance of a very knowledgeable co-ordinator have created a positive climate for using information and communication technology to support learning. Throughout the school, pupils show confidence and good levels of competence in using computers. By the end of Year 2, pupils develop very good skills for their age in using the keyboard and mouse. Crucial skills such as using word processing programs to create text and then edit, save and print are well developed. A good awareness of control is developed by teachers through the good use of a programmable toy that enables pupils to develop skills of command and control. Teachers use information and communication technology effectively to introduce essential skills that are then applied to support learning across the curriculum. Pupils make good use of CD Roms and the Internet to locate and research information. By the end of Year 6, pupils are very competent at combining text and images to generate multimedia presentations and many pupils use these skills to create good quality projects to support subjects such as history. Those teachers with access to interactive whiteboards make good use of them to not only enliven lessons through, for example, displaying stimulating images and pictures, but also to enable pupils to interact with the screen as part of learning. Although all strands of the curriculum are planned and taught, there are relative weaknesses in two areas. The use of sensing equipment and opportunities for pupils to develop e-mail links with others are relative weaknesses that are being addressed as part of the current development plan.

57. The subject is effectively led and managed by a knowledgeable and enthusiastic co-ordinator. Good support is given to other staff, and hard work is improving the quality of the curriculum and the way that pupils' achievement is assessed. Resources are satisfactory and much better than they were. Despite very little time for the co-ordinator to manage the subject free of class responsibilities, the quality of monitoring is effective and contributes to a well-planned and realistic subject development plan that is a useful tool for guiding improvement in provision. Care is taken to ensure that all connections to the Internet are as safe and secure as they can be.

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

58. The use of information and communication technology to support learning across the curriculum is good. Pupils' good skills and knowledge are capitalised on to support learning in most subjects. Computers are used well to extend learning in both mathematics and English and good use is made of research skills to locate information associated with history and geography. As part of art and design, pupils explore and create designs in the style of artists such as Mondrian and Matisse and the use of the digital camera adds to the quality of reporting of work in design and technology. The use of information and communication technology to support science is relatively weak.

### **HUMANITIES**

59. Religious education was inspected separately by the diocese under Section 23. Limitations of time and the timetabling of geography as the main area of study for the week meant that it was not possible to make secure judgements about the provision in history. Geography, however, was inspected in full and is reported below.
60. In **history**, pupils' work was sampled and discussions were conducted with pupils. Evidence shows that standards have been maintained since the last inspection and are above the national expectations at the end of both Years 2 and 6. Pupils have good knowledge and understanding of the programmes of study. In Year 2, pupils develop a sense of chronology by studying the Victorians and comparing differences in such areas as travel and schooling. They can talk about people in the past and record and remember details and events. For example, they recall the life story of Queen Victoria. Year 6 pupils particularly enjoy history. This is evident in their well-presented workbooks that show not only their understanding of history, but the way they have researched and recorded their findings. Pupils also empathise with children and people of other eras. They are equally at home discussing World War II and the evacuation of children from the towns, the difference between Spartan and Athenian life styles, and life in the Tudor times. They were also proud of the shows they had presented using music, art and drama to inform and entertain the school and parents about facts they had learnt about the Ancient Greeks.

### **Geography**

Provision in geography is **good**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching is good.
- The curriculum is well supported by linking geography with other subjects.
- Learning is enhanced by well-planned field studies closely linked to programmes of study.

## Commentary

61. Standards in Key Stage 1 have improved since the last inspection. Pupils are currently achieving well and standards are above national expectations at the end of both Years 2 and 6. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a good understanding of the differences between human and physical geography. Pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of their local environment and a good knowledge of climatic zones and mountain ranges. Throughout the school, pupils use correct technical language when describing geographical features. Their knowledge of the seas and oceans of the world is satisfactorily developed.
62. Generally, teaching and learning are good so that pupils make good progress and achieve well. Just occasionally teaching is satisfactory rather than good. When this occurs it is usually because the pace is a little slow. Planning is good, and planned cross-curricular links are a feature of this. A very good feature is the number of field trips that provide pupils with first hand experiences and make learning come to life. For instance, the forthcoming residential to Whitby for pupils in Years 5 and 6 and the study of maps of Whitby and Stockport led to a lively discussion and provided the platform for pupils to use their mapping skills and compare the two areas. Teachers encourage children to learn through a variety of methods, including their own research through books or the Internet. Good use is made of information and communication technology by teachers to promote learning. High expectations exist for older pupils, for example, to create high quality work based upon the residential visit and field study of the area. Good links are made with other subjects, for instance, linking the work on co-ordination points with work on mathematics. Pupils enjoy geography and take a pride in their work.
63. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The newly appointed co-ordinator is keen to develop the curriculum to meet the needs of pupils as the school changes to one form entry and the subject continues to be fully covered in order to improve provision and further raise standards. Regular monitoring of the curriculum takes place through scrutiny of pupils' work and of teachers' planning, although no time is allowed during the school day for observation of teaching. Assessment procedures are satisfactory but are not stringent enough to enable teachers to identify and monitor pupils' progress and ensure differentiated challenging work is offered to pupils of differing abilities. At the time of the last inspection, resources were good but, because of the changes to be made in the curriculum, the co-ordinator is well aware of further resources that will be required. At present resources are satisfactory. The overall quality of provision has been maintained since the last inspection.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

64. Limitations of time meant that it was not possible to make secure judgements about the provision in **art and design, design and technology, music or physical education**.
65. In **art and design**, the subject co-ordinator's very good subject knowledge, together with her enthusiasm, has ensured that the planning for art and design has continued to develop effectively. There has been sustained improvement from the previous inspection which impacts positively on the standards and quality of work. Standards are above average at the end of Years 2 and 6, and pupils achieve well. A good curriculum in art and design provides a rich and varied programme of experiences for pupils, contributing effectively to pupils' cultural and spiritual development. Very effective links are made with other subjects, alongside the skilled teaching of important techniques. The work of famous artists is studied very well throughout the school. Pupils use the computer effectively to investigate the work of famous artists and, in Year 6, to draw pictures of themselves. Visiting artists further enhance the curriculum by working alongside pupils on extended projects and this creates good links with the community. Assessment procedures are satisfactory and teachers have a good knowledge of pupils' progress and attainment.
66. In **design and technology**, there was sufficient evidence to form a judgement about pupils' standards and achievement. Pupils' work shows that standards have risen since the last inspection and are now above national expectations at the end of both Years 2 and 6. Very effective leadership and management by a hardworking and talented co-ordinator have created a very well organised and planned curriculum. This underpins the good achievement that occurs across the school. Pupils respond well to high expectations for them to plan, design, make and evaluate in a wide range of contexts. Wherever possible, pupils' work is brought to life by making clear links between tasks and other lessons. For example, as part of work related to science and music, older pupils designed and made high quality musical instruments. Resources are adequate but resources to challenge and extend the knowledge and understanding of higher-attaining pupils in terms of mechanisms and structures are relatively few. The quality of pupils' recording of their work is mostly of a high standard and discussions with pupils show that they have a mature view of evaluating what they do and how they might improve their work further.
67. **Music** has a high profile in the school and contributes well to pupils' personal and social development. There is a particular strength in the high quality of singing. A good contribution to musical development is the range of visiting teachers provided to enrich the pupils' musical experience outside the formal curriculum. Pupils receive a weekly class lesson from a specialist teacher who has a very good knowledge of teaching singing. It is evident from listening to the pupils singing in assembly, which was led by the acting headteacher and acting deputy, and in one lesson seen during the inspection, that the pupils perform to a very high standard, as they did at the last inspection. Pupils in

Year 5 and 6 can hold their part very well in a two-part round and appreciate the effect of the harmonies produced. All pupils sing songs and hymns with energy and enthusiasm and clearly enjoy singing together. The singing is very tuneful and the words of songs and hymns are clear and audible. The majority of pupils in Years 3 to 6 are learning to play a wide variety of brass, wind and string instruments. A number of the younger children learn to play the recorder and there is a choir and orchestra that perform regularly in the school and local area. Musical productions receive a high profile in the school and are linked to topics covered, such as the visit to Whitby. The latest music production was linked to Ancient Greece in history and Legends in English in 'The Minotaur Show'. There are many opportunities given for pupils to listen and appraise music both in assembly and during class lessons and this contributes well to the pupils' cultural and spiritual development. However, there are limited opportunities provided in the curriculum for the pupils to experiment with tuned and untuned percussion while creating and evaluating their own compositions. The use of information and communication technology is underdeveloped in this subject. This is similar to the last inspection. Pupils are taught about famous composers, as seen when they listened carefully to the life story of Sebastian Bach. Resources are satisfactory but do not represent instruments and music from different cultures.

68. The circumstances of the inspection made it impossible to make sufficient observations of **physical education**. A judgement about the standards and achievement of pupils cannot be made. Evidence available, however, indicates that the school ensures that physical education is a key part of every pupil's education. All aspects of the National Curriculum are planned for and all pupils in Years 4 to 6 have access to swimming, with most exceeding the standards expected by the age of eleven. Good use is made of professional coaches to support teaching, for example in rugby. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 benefit from attending a residential educational visit and this enables them to participate in a wide range of outdoor adventure activities. Good attention is given to using physical education to raise pupils' awareness of the importance of healthy living and the importance of exercise and fitness in maintaining a healthy mind.

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

69. The school has an effective programme for this area of pupils' development. The area of provision is led by a most enthusiastic and hardworking co-ordinator. A good policy has been developed which underpins the school's aims. Links with other areas of the curriculum are identified but, as yet, there is limited identification of skills in the scheme of work. Pupils' awareness of personal safety and of the importance of living a healthy life is very high. Pupils demonstrate a mature attitude towards each other and adults and are very well prepared for their future life in the community. The school council is starting to play an active part in decisions relating to the life of the school. All pupils show consistent and very mature levels of care and consideration for each other.

## 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	3
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>3</b>
Pupils' achievement	3
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>2</b>
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
<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	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	4
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
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	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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

