

## INSPECTION REPORT

**ST PHILIP'S CE VC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Bath

LEA area: Bath and North-East Somerset

Unique reference number: 109152

Headteacher: Mr I. Russell

Lead inspector: Harold Galley

Dates of inspection: 20<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2005

Inspection number: 267939

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: 300

School address: Bloomfield Rise  
Odd Down  
Bath

Postcode: BA2 2BN

Telephone number: 01225 837946

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Appropriate authority: Governing Body  
Name of chair of governors: Reverend John Coe

Date of previous inspection: June 2003

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St Philip's CE VC is an above average sized primary school in Bath, with 300 pupils on roll. Pupils come from a variety of social backgrounds. However, the socio-economic circumstances of most pupils are below average. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is below average, especially with regard to language and literacy skills. The school has an equal mix of boys and girls and almost all pupils are white. Six per cent of pupils come from different minority ethnic groups. There are no travellers or asylum seekers and no one speaks English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils, 17 per cent, on the school's special educational needs register is average. Pupils at the school have a range of special educational needs, with an above average number having behavioural difficulties. An unusual feature is the high incidence of summer term birthdays, especially in Years 5 and 6. During the last year, the school has suffered from several long term staff absences, causing some classes to be disrupted with much use of supply teacher cover.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21313	Harold Galley	Lead inspector	Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage, Mathematics, History, Geography, Special educational needs, Personal, social and health education.
9644	Mike Whitaker	Lay inspector	
22578	Gavin Jones	Team inspector	English, Information and communication technology, Physical education, Religious education.
32366	Jackie Buttriss	Team inspector	Science, Art and design, Design and technology, Music.

The inspection contractor was:

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

St Philip's is a good school overall, despite some weaknesses in provision for older pupils. As a result of good teaching, most pupils achieve well in relation to their abilities. The school is very well led with energy and vision by the headteacher. The school gives good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Children make a very good start in reception, where teaching is consistently very good.
- Teaching in Years 1 to 4 is consistently good with some very good features.
- The headteacher provides very good leadership.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good throughout the school.
- The care and support provided for pupils is very good.
- The school has a clear and effective Christian ethos.
- In Year 6 there are significant differences between the achievement of boys and girls, with girls' achievement being unsatisfactory.
- Attitudes to learning for a small number of pupils in Years 5 and 6 are unsatisfactory.
- The role of subject leaders is underdeveloped.
- Pupils do not make enough use of ICT to support their learning in other subjects.

Improvement since the last inspection by Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) in June 2003 has been satisfactory. However, there have been significant improvements over the last four years since inspectors found the school to be in need of special measures. Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 have improved above the national trend. The only key issue from the last inspection relating to the monitoring of progress of pupils with special educational needs has been fully addressed.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*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' achievement in Year 6 is satisfactory overall. The school's analysis of the 2004 National Curriculum test results showed that the disappointing 'similar schools' grades last year were due almost entirely to the unsatisfactory achievement of girls. However, boys achieved well, making overall achievement satisfactory. Standards observed during the inspection were below average in English and mathematics, but average in science. A key factor in the present Year 6 is the unusual pattern of birthdays, with as many as half of pupils having their birthdays during the summer term. In 2004 standards in Year 2 were well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards seen during the inspection were not quite so high, but still above average in reading, writing and mathematics. In the reception class, children achieve very well in all areas of learning although, because of the low level of attainment on entry, standards are only just at the expected level by the start of Year 1.

Throughout the school, pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Attitudes in most classes are good, apart from in Years 5 and 6, where attitudes to learning are unsatisfactory. Behaviour during the inspection was at least satisfactory throughout the school. However, despite its best efforts, the school has failed to convince enough parents, and some pupils, that it is dealing effectively with bullying. Attendance is satisfactory.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The quality of education is good overall. Teaching and learning are good overall. In the reception class, teaching is very good, with consistently good teaching in Years 1 to 4. In Years 5 and 6 teaching is satisfactory. In all classes teachers exude a considerable confidence and lessons are presented in a lively, upbeat manner. Detailed planning leads to well organised lessons. Special educational needs provision is good. Teaching assistants provide valuable support particularly for pupils with special educational needs during the practical parts of lessons.

Despite some significant strengths, the curriculum is judged as satisfactory. It covers all subjects and is both broad and balanced. It is enriched by effective provision for pupils' personal development and a satisfactory range of extracurricular activities for sports and the arts. A good programme of visits and visitors and residential trips enrich the curriculum. Weaknesses in curriculum provision include a limited use of writing and of ICT to support pupils' learning in a range of subjects. Care, support and guidance are very good and there are very effective arrangements to settle pupils into the routines of school life. Good links with the community and with other schools make an invaluable contribution to the quality of the school's provision. Links with parents are satisfactory, although the school recognises it still has much to do to develop parental confidence in the school.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership and management of the school are good overall. The headteacher's dedication and clear vision enable him to lead very well. He has led the school through a difficult period with skill and determination. However, extensive staff absences during the last year have led to some gaps in the leadership of key subjects. Governance is satisfactory, with some good features. Governors are supportive of the school, well led by the chair, and have a clear picture of the schools' strengths and weaknesses.

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

Most parents have positive opinions about the school, although a significant minority are concerned about the way in which the school deals with bullying. Pupils' views closely reflect those of parents, with most being happy and proud of their school, but with a minority concerned about the poor attitudes and behaviour of a few older pupils.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Improve levels of achievement of older girls, in order to lead to higher standards in English, mathematics and science in Year 6.
- Address the issue of unsatisfactory attitudes in Years 5 and 6, thus improving parental confidence in the school.
- Develop the role of subject leaders.
- Ensure pupils use ICT more productively to support learning in other subjects.

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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

As teaching is good overall this leads to good achievement in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. However, in Years 5 and 6 there are significant differences between the achievement of boys and girls, with girls' achievement being unsatisfactory.

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

- Children in the Foundation Stage (reception) make a very good start to their education.
- Pupils achieve well in Years 1 to 4.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Although boys achieve well in Years 5 and 6, girls' achievement is unsatisfactory.

#### **Commentary**

1. When children join the school, their attainment is below average, especially with regard to language and literacy skills. As a result of consistently very good teaching in reception, children make very good progress in all areas of learning. Teachers give a high priority to developing literacy and numeracy skills, although, despite the very good progress, standards are barely at the expected levels by the time children start Year 1.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	17.1 (16.6 )	15.8 (15.7 )
Writing	16.9 (16.0 )	14.6 (14.6 )
Mathematics	17.3 (16.1)	16.2 (16.3 )

*There were 46 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

2. In National Curriculum assessments in 2004, standards at the end of Year 2 were well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. In science teacher assessments judged standards to be at the national average. From a barely average starting point, these results represent very good achievement for boys and girls. Over the last four years standards have risen clearly above the national trend. Standards observed during the inspection were not quite so high, but remain above the national average. There was insufficient inspection evidence to make judgements about the standards in all other subjects, although standards in most subjects are at the expected levels.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.3 (26.6 )	26.9 (26.8 )
Mathematics	27.4 (26.6 )	27.0 (26.8 )
Science	28.1 (29.5 )	28.6 (28.6 )

*There were 48 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

3. In the 2004 National Curriculum tests standards at the end of Year 6 were below the national average in English and science, but average in mathematics. An unusual feature of



these results was the significant difference in the achievement of boys and girls, especially in English.

4. Boys' achievement was good but girls' achievement was unsatisfactory. Overall, achievement is judged to be just satisfactory. Standards observed during the inspection were slightly lower in English and mathematics, but higher in science. A key factor in the present Year 6 is the very unusual breakdown of birthdays, with half the year group being born in the summer term and as many as one-quarter not having their eleventh birthday until after the end of term. As in Year 2 standards over the last four years have risen above the national trend.

5. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. Teachers make effective use of these plans, presenting work that is carefully matched to pupils' prior attainments. Pupils' achievements are enhanced by the close links between teachers and their assistants and the high quality of support provided by assistants in all classes.

6. Teachers keep detailed assessment records of pupils' progress in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. These records are used very effectively to plan appropriate work for pupils with special educational needs, but are not used as well for higher attaining pupils. As a result, the work set for more able pupils is sometimes unchallenging, particularly in Years 5 and 6.

7. There was insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement about standards in ICT. This was largely because, although there is the usual programme of ICT lessons across the school every week, most of these lessons fell outside the timetable of the actual inspection. Evidence from a scrutiny of pupils' work suggests that standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with national expectations.

8. Standards in other subjects are broadly in line with national expectations, although standards in art and design are above average in Year 6, as are standards in swimming.

9. The significant improvement in recent years of standards in both Year 2 and Year 6 owes much to the determined leadership of the headteacher and the consistently good quality of teaching in most classes across the school.

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

This is a school in which the majority of pupils, supported by a strong Christian ethos, and very good spiritual development, behave very well and display positive attitudes for most of the time. Pupils' social and moral development overall is good. These strengths, however, are undermined by the negative attitudes and unsatisfactory behaviour of a minority of older pupils. Attendance is satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Whilst the majority of pupils demonstrate good interest and engagement in school life, a minority of pupils in the Years 5 and 6 classes display unsatisfactory attitudes.
- Behaviour in the Foundation Stage and amongst pupils up to Year 3 is very good. However, the incidence of harassment and aggression amongst a significant minority of older pupils, especially in Years 5 and 6, is unacceptably high.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development overall is good, although the social and moral development of some older pupils is barely satisfactory.
- The school has a strong Christian ethos.

## Commentary

10. Pupils' attitudes to school, overall, are satisfactory. This judgement, however, conceals wide variations. In the Foundation Stage the youngest children are keen and enthusiastic, demonstrating a very good response to a stimulating and supportive environment and a range of interesting activities. The response of younger pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 is invariably good and often very good. These pupils are enthusiastic and interested in their lessons. This is true too of the majority of pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6. They are happy to accept responsibilities: for example service as a school councillor, representing the school in competitive sport, or training as playground 'buddies'. There is, however, a minority of pupils in these year groups who demonstrate a lack of involvement for their lessons and school activities. Several instances were observed, for example, when pupils decided that activities such as quiet reading or physical education were of no interest to them and they simply opted out. In an assembly, at which Year 5 pupils' success in an area athletics competition was being celebrated, attitudes of the Year 6 boys that would be joined in the apple children in the reception class and younger pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 behave very well. They are aware of the school's expectations and comply happily with basic classroom routines. They are polite to visitors, respectful of their teachers, and friendly with each other. The school has been aware of behavioural problems amongst older pupils and has introduced a number of strategies to address the matter. Exclusion has been used where necessary - over the preceding twelve months there were nine fixed-period exclusions involving seven pupils. No pupils were excluded during the spring term of the current year although two pupils were excluded at the time of the inspection. The school has drawn on outside expertise to address the problem. For example, pupils' attitudes to school are monitored, and extensive use is made of the local education authority's behaviour support team. Pupils are given access to therapies through art and music and by way of a Phoenix Club for potentially disaffected young people. The school's behaviour policy has been revised and is under constant review. During the inspection, behaviour in all classes, including those of Years 4, 5 and 6 was satisfactory, although there was some low-level disruptive behaviour on the part of a minority of pupils. The concern is bullying and harassment. In the Ofsted pre-inspection questionnaire, 23 per cent of respondents were unable to agree that behaviour was good and 22 per cent felt that their children were bullied. An unusually large number of written responses (25) from parents was received before and during the inspection. Of these, 16 (64 per cent) cited poor behaviour and bullying as a concern. Inspection observations suggest that the harassment takes place in the playground or, more frequently, outside school on the journey home.

12. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, overall, is good. Spiritual development is very good. The school has a strong Christian ethos that permeates all aspects of its life; pupils are encouraged to see spirituality in art and in the natural world (such as the Year 2 sensory garden). The moral and social development of the majority of pupils is good. The school has a clear set of values that are well promoted through class rules, personal, social and health education (PSHE) and circle time discussions, the very good example of all adults in school, the emphasis upon inclusion and support for pupils with special educational needs. Pupils are encouraged to contribute to the life of the school and the majority do. But the positive moral and social development of the majority is undermined by the negative attitudes of a self-absorbed minority of older pupils who are unable to see themselves as members of the school community. Overall, therefore, social and moral development is no more than satisfactory. Cultural development is good. Pupils are aware of their own cultural heritage through a wide range of stimulating visits and visitors. They are aware of faiths and traditions other than their own.

13. Attendance is in line with the national average for primary schools and, consequently, satisfactory.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.8	School data	0.2
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

**Ethnic background of pupils**

**Exclusions in the last school year**

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	278	9	0
White – any other White background	4	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	6	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	5	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	6	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	1	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	2	0	0

*The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.*

**QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

The quality of education provided by the school is good overall, despite some weaknesses in provision for older pupils.

**Teaching and learning**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Assessment procedures are good and used effectively in most lessons.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching in the reception class is consistently very good.
- Teaching in Years 1 to 4 is good.
- Effective planning leads to well organised lessons.
- Teachers use ICT in an imaginative way to engage pupils.
- Teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good across the school.
- Although satisfactory overall, teaching in Years 5 and 6 is sometimes uninspiring and sometimes lacks challenge for some pupils, especially girls.
- Teachers' marking does not give pupils a clear idea of their strengths and weaknesses, nor what they need to do to improve further.

**Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 38 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (2.6%)	10 (26.3%)	18 (47.4%)	9 (23.7%)	0 (0%)	0 (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.*

## **Commentary**

14. The teaching of children in the Foundation Stage (reception class) is very good. Both teachers and their assistants have established a warm rapport with all the children and have created a calm, purposeful and stimulating learning environment. The teachers' very good management skills and enthusiasm for learning mean that children behave very well and are keen to learn. All the relevant areas of learning are covered thoroughly.

15. In Years 1 to 4 teaching is good overall with some very good, and occasionally excellent, teaching in Years 1 and 2. Planning is effective and leads to lively, well organised lessons that proceed with good pace. All teachers speak clearly, enabling all pupils, but especially those with special educational needs, to take a full part in all aspects of the lessons. Teachers are confident and present lessons in a lively, upbeat manner. As a result, pupils are interested and engaged and lessons proceed at a good pace. In the best lessons the teachers' infectious enthusiasm leads to a dynamic pace, a demanding work ethic and pupils make very good progress. Teaching in Years 5 to 6 is satisfactory. Although lessons in these classes have many of the positive characteristics of the good lessons described above, teachers' expectations of pupils in terms of effort and quality of work are not so high. The pace of work slows and some pupils, more often than not girls, do not make enough progress in the group and individual part of the lessons. Teachers use time fairly well, but, especially in Years 5 and 6, teachers spend too much time talking to the whole class with the result that the time for consolidating skills is too brief.

16. Teachers keep detailed records of pupils' progress and these records are often used to plan work for pupils of differing prior attainment. This is especially effective with regard to the teaching of pupils with special educational needs. The work set for these pupils is always well matched to their prior attainments and, as a result, they achieve well, particularly in English, mathematics and science lessons. The challenge for more able pupils is not managed so well, particularly in Years 5 and 6, and too often work is insufficiently challenging.

17. Not enough lessons were observed to make reliable judgements about teaching in all other subjects. However, teaching was good in all three art and design lessons seen, and very good in two music lessons. Teaching in physical education is variable, but good overall.

18. Teaching has improved since the last inspection two years ago and has been transformed since the last full inspection. This owes much to the determined leadership of the headteacher as well as the professional and committed approach of all staff across the school.

## **The curriculum**

Curriculum provision is satisfactory overall, with several good features.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There are good opportunities for enrichment.
- Provision is good for pupils with special educational needs.
- There is good provision for personal, social and health education.
- Learning support assistants provide good support.
- Accommodation and resources are good.
- Insufficient use is made by pupils of ICT across the curriculum.
- The co-ordination and monitoring of some subjects need to be developed.

## **Commentary**

19. The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets statutory requirements, including provision for religious education and collective worship. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by teachers and by experienced and effective learning support assistants. There is equality of access and opportunity overall.

20. Pupils in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 are well prepared to move on to the next stage of learning. Transition units and visits prepare pupils in Years 3 to 6 for their move to secondary schools. Personal, social and health education is planned and timetabled throughout the school and is taught through circle times and class lessons, giving pupils good opportunities for considering their own and others' needs.

21. Standardised schemes of work ensure continuity and progression as pupils move through the school, providing a sound framework for planning and teaching across the curriculum. Subject leaders give generally satisfactory leadership, but do not all have sufficient opportunities for monitoring teaching and learning in their subjects and, therefore, cannot develop an overview of provision across the school. Assessment and performance analysis is used appropriately in most subjects to inform further planning and teaching. Teachers' marking of pupils' work is basically sound, but most marking lacks the constructive comments which would enable pupils to raise their levels of achievement.

22. There are some productive links between subjects across the curriculum, but ICT is not used sufficiently to teach other subjects, and computers are rarely used by pupils in classroom lessons to practise and extend their skills or to undertake research across the curriculum. However, the interactive whiteboards installed in every classroom provide good support for teaching and learning.

23. There is a good range of extracurricular activities on offer which provide enrichment, especially in sports. A good programme of visits and visitors is planned throughout the year, with an enjoyable and stimulating residential camp for pupils in Year 6.

24. The school's accommodation for learning is generally spacious and well maintained, with additional areas for specialist provision. Accommodation in the recently built Foundation Stage is excellent. Resources are good across the curriculum and the separate libraries are very well stocked. Teaching and support staff are suitably qualified and there is a satisfactory pupil-teacher ratio.

25. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory, although there have been significant improvements over the last four years.

## **Care, guidance and support**

The attention to pupils' care, welfare and personal support, including induction arrangements, is very good. Pupils' involvement in the life of the school is good.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school's concern for pupils' welfare is very good.
- Arrangements for induction are very good.
- Pupils' involvement in the day-to-day life of the school is good.

## **Commentary**

26. In keeping with its strong Christian ethos the school provides very good personal support for its pupils. Good child protection and health and safety arrangements ensure pupils' security, and very good relationships between staff and pupils provide emotional support. Staff know their pupils well and each class teacher keeps good records of pupils' personal development to reinforce that knowledge. Pupils' welfare is very well promoted. There is a wide range of innovative provision for pupils experiencing difficulties. Therapy for pupils with behaviour problems is provided through art and music. The school nurse supports pupils, individually and through their families, for a range of health related matters, and she runs sessions for Year 4 pupils addressing bullying and other emotional issues. Through the agency of one of the secondary schools, the school hosts a Phoenix Club that seeks to address the needs of disaffected pupils.

27. There are very good arrangements for induction. In the Ofsted pre-inspection questionnaire 94 per cent of parents said that they were happy with the arrangements. There are close links with a nearby pre-school group and children make visits to the school in the summer term before they start. Parents attend induction meetings and, in addition, they are offered home visits. Parents spoken to during the inspection were very happy with the arrangement. The school shares its initial assessment (the Foundation Stage profile) of the child's development with parents at the first consultation meeting.

28. The school has good procedures for involving pupils in the life of the school. The school council, consisting of a boy and a girl from each class, meets fortnightly, considers matters raised by their classes, and reports back afterwards. The councillors discuss equipment, play provision, and matters relating to behaviour and bullying. They are trusted to take matters forward for themselves: for example they wrote to parents advocating the provision of healthy snacks at break time. A number of pupils in Years 5 and 6 classes have been trained by Childline as playground buddies, whose remit is to resolve differences and support younger pupils. The school carries out attitude surveys amongst pupils.

29. Improvement in this area, since the last inspection, is good.

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

The school works hard to forge links with parents through good quality information and opportunities for parental involvement. Despite these efforts a minority of parents remain dissatisfied. Good links with the community and other schools serve to enhance pupils' experiences.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school provides parents with information of good quality about school events and children's progress.
- Good links with other schools and the community enrich children's learning.
- A significant minority of parents are unhappy about the way the school handles behavioural problems, and with its communications with parents.

## **Commentary**

30. The quality of information provided for parents is good. In the Ofsted pre-inspection parents' questionnaire 18 per cent of parents felt that they were insufficiently well informed about their children's progress. Inspection evidence does not support that view. The school provides termly consultation meetings with parents. Those in the autumn and spring terms are well attended, the one following the issue of children's annual reports in the summer term is less so. Pupils' reports are good - they are concise but address each subject of the National Curriculum separately. In the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, progress and targets are addressed and parents are told whether their child's attainment is in line with expectations. The language used is clear, and comments on the child's personal development are perceptive. For parents who are uncomfortable with formality staff are readily accessible in the playground at the end of the day. Regular newsletters keep parents informed about school events; copies of the latest newsletter are available on notice boards and on the school's impressive website. Termly letters give parents advance notice of the topics each class will be addressing. In addition, curriculum workshops are organised for parents. The school's website is comprehensive, containing details of school policies, organisation, staff and governors, recent newsletters, the prospectus, school news, examples of children's work, and contact e-mail addresses.

31. Despite the wealth of information that the school provides a minority of parents does not feel involved. In the Ofsted pre-inspection questionnaire 20 per cent of respondents felt that the school did not take account of parents' concerns. The school trawls parental views by questionnaire every other year, and, from time to time, will seek views on specific issues: for example the use of home visits to pre-school children, and the school travel plan. However, parents' principle concern is behaviour; they are anxious about the impact of disruptive children on their own children's learning, and they worry about the incidence of bullying. The school has adopted a wide range of strategies to address these matters but, despite its best efforts, it has failed to convince a minority of parents that it is dealing effectively enough with the problem.

32. The school has good links with partner institutions and with the community. Pupils transfer to a number of secondary schools, in part because the majority of Bath's secondary schools are single sex. The school has good links with most of these schools and pupils visit them for a variety of purposes - they use the athletics facility at one, the design and technology and mathematics expertise, and ICT facilities at others. Transfer arrangements include visits to the school by Year 7 staff, familiarisation days, induction meetings for parents and liaison on friendship groups. The school provides good support for local students and trainees. It hosts graduate teacher trainees from the local university and provides work experience for secondary school pupils and students from the college of further education. There are close links with the local pre-school group.

33. A variety of links with the community enriches pupils' learning. The school makes good use of the locality as a learning resource, with visits to Bath Abbey, to the SS Great Britain in Bristol, and to local museums. Year 6 leavers visit Wells Cathedral for a day and there are close links with local churches. A local artist is working with children on stone carvings for the school buildings. Family learning and parenting courses are organised. The school choir sings locally and in the city centre at Christmas. Wider links, for example with children and schools in Africa and India, enhance pupils' awareness of the wider world. There is good community use of the school premises.

34. The school's efforts to involve and engage parents have improved in recent years, although a minority of parents still have insufficient confidence in the school's strategies.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership of the headteacher is very good, whilst the management of the school is good overall. The leadership and management of key staff and the governing body are satisfactory, although the leadership of the chair of governors is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher has a very good vision for the development of the school.
- The headteacher is leading the development of behaviour management very well.
- The school is very focused on trying to become fully inclusive.
- The role of some subject leaders is underdeveloped.
- The governing body is well led by the chair.

### **Commentary**

35. There have been significant improvements in the leadership and management of the school since the appointment of the current headteacher. Through his vision the school has made very good progress in a number of areas, which were noted as major issues at the last full inspection.

36. The head has improved behaviour, so that during the inspection, behaviour and pupils' attitudes to their work were very good in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1, 2 and 3, and satisfactory elsewhere. Currently the school is beginning to make some inroads into the problem it faces with a minority of disaffected pupils in Year 6. These pupils often choose to opt out of activities such as silent reading and aspects of physical education. The English subject leader is carrying out a programme to try to involve Year 5 girls much more in their work in writing through an imaginative and well developed self-help programme. The headteacher has supported improvements in standards in Years 1 and 2 and has improved the way that the school plans for its future development. He has done this through involving staff as an effective team, but has been hampered somewhat by the number of long term absences of staff, especially key staff.

37. Whilst the governance of the school is satisfactory, the chair of governors has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. However, regular changes in key staff subject leaders mean that initiatives have been difficult to put into effect over time and the number of changes to subject leaders has had a detrimental effect on the development of some subjects. For example, in both ICT and religious education, there have been four changes in leadership in each subject over the last four years. This makes long term development difficult and causes the subject to lag behind in developmental terms.

38. English, science, the Foundation Stage, special educational needs and physical education are all led well, whilst leadership in other subjects is underdeveloped. Year groups plan well together to promote the curriculum in their particular years, but subject leaders are not yet closely monitoring the work produced nor are they having opportunities to monitor teaching and learning in their subjects. The school's current development plan does address this issue and plans are in place to improve provision.

39. The school is working hard to be fully inclusive. There is good overall support for pupils with special educational needs. Pupils who are gifted and talented are noted and they are given opportunities to attend sessions for the development of their talents within the local cluster of schools. Whilst the school has good systems of assessment, they are not yet being used well enough to highlight the needs of all pupils. As a result, in some



lessons, work prescribed for different groups of pupils is too similar and does not contain sufficient challenge for them all, especially for the higher achieving pupils.

40. Day to day management of finances is carried out well by the office staff, who give a friendly welcome to visitors. The budget is well managed and the school has chosen to use all of its extra funding to support the engagement of teachers who will take classes in order to relieve class teachers for their administrative duties under the new regulations. As a result there will be little money to carry forward at the end of the financial year. Overall, the school provides good value for money.

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	665,715
Total expenditure	644,043
Expenditure per pupil	2029

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	-19487
Balance carried forward to the next	14369

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

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

In all areas of learning in the Foundation Stage provision is **very good**.

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

- Teaching and learning are very good in all areas of learning.
- Excellent relationships underpin an especially calm and purposeful atmosphere.
- Attitudes to learning are very good.
- Accommodation and resources are excellent.

#### **Commentary**

41. Overall, children enter school with below average levels of knowledge and skills in most areas of learning. They quickly adjust to the demands of the school day. A series of home visits, much appreciated by parents and carers, ensure that children feel confident quickly about the learning environment. Children are carefully assessed when they start school and their progress is carefully tracked throughout the school year. This ensures that children are provided with tasks that are well matched to their different needs. A major improvement since the last inspection has been the creation of a specially built unit for the Foundation Stage. Not surprisingly, then, accommodation and resources are judged to be excellent.

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

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

#### **Commentary**

42. This key area of learning is given a high priority by teaching and non-teaching staff and children achieve very well. All staff work hard to create a calm, happy atmosphere so that children are confident to discuss any problems they have. Teachers' high expectations of children and effective organisation mean that children quickly learn how to control their emotions and to develop independence. All staff positively promote a clear understanding of right and wrong. A wide range of interesting and stimulating activities, both inside and outdoors, gives children ample opportunity to learn how to share and take turns, and they manage these skills with considerable maturity. Most children behave well because of the teachers' high standards of discipline.

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

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

#### **Commentary**

43. Achievement is very good because of consistently very good teaching. Teachers plan a wide range of opportunities for children to talk in front of the class, to an adult, or to peers. The calm, relaxed atmosphere gives children the confidence to speak in front of the class. When the teachers speak to the class children listen in respectful silence with complete focus on the teacher. As a result listening skills are developed effectively.

44. Both teachers give a high priority to the development of early reading skills, underpinned by a skilful focus on developing phonics (sounds of letters) skills. Teachers read at least two stories every day to children, often with imaginative use of the interactive

whiteboards, thus engendering an early love of literature. All children proudly take home their book bag every day, making a significant contribution to children's achievement in reading.

45. Teachers have high expectations in terms of children's development in writing and children respond to a range of tasks with enthusiasm. Almost all children can write their own name and some are already attempting complete sentences.

46. Despite the below average starting point most children are on course to reach the Early Learning Goals expected of children by the end of the school year.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

### **Commentary**

47. Teachers plan a wide range of stimulating activities that effectively promote children's knowledge and understanding of numbers. For example, at the start of the day the calling of the register is used to revise number sequences, with questions such as, "Today is the 20<sup>th</sup>, yesterday was the..... and, tomorrow will be the.....?" Lively counting games show that children count accurately to 10 and many cope with much bigger numbers confidently. Role play activities such as the 'travel agency' encourage children to use pretend money in a sensible manner. A strength of provision in this area of learning is the good use of ICT to support children's development, with appropriate software introducing children to the names of two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes. By the end of the school year most children are on course to reach the standards expected of this age group.

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

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

### **Commentary**

48. As a result of consistently very good teaching children achieve very well and most are on course to reach the expected standards by the end of the school year. A particular strength of provision in this area of learning is children's knowledge and understanding of animals, resulting from a well planned topic that led to a lively exhibition of children's work. As in other areas of learning, ICT is used constructively to support children's progress; for example, children learned about places in different countries as part of the 'Barnaby Bear' program, using the cursor with confidence and dexterity. Children learn about plants and how they grow, through a project involving children growing their own vegetables, such as radishes and potatoes, which they subsequently learn to cook and eat.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

### **Commentary**

49. There was insufficient evidence to judge children's overall progress in this area of learning. However, it is clear from teachers' thorough planning and from the excellent accommodation and resources that this area of learning is given a very high priority by all

staff. The reception classes are housed in a specially designed unit opened since the last inspection and these give children plenty of opportunity to play and work in stimulating indoor and outdoor environments. Children have access to a range of bikes, trikes and scooters, and an imaginative climbing frame. Planning shows a range of interactive, physically demanding activities are organised every day. Children have access to the school hall for physical education lessons on a regular basis. Children have access to resources such as play dough, scissors and brushes, in order to develop physical skills.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

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

### **Commentary**

50. There was not enough evidence to make a secure judgement about children's overall achievements or about the quality of teaching. However, a scrutiny of children's work and of teachers' plans indicate that this area of learning is given a very high priority and that children benefit from a wide range of stimulating and imaginative tasks. Children use a wide range of paints, crayons, pencils, play dough, plasticene and clay, often producing lively creations. An unusual feature is access to a kiln, which allows clay work to be finished in a professional manner. Children much enjoy an ever-changing home-play area that stimulates imaginative play. Children sing a variety of songs and during the inspection, showed considerable enthusiasm and skill.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

#### **Strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards at the end of Year 2 are above national averages, whilst standards at the end of Year 6 are below average.
- Teaching is good in Years 1 to 3 and satisfactory in Years 4 to 6.
- The leadership and management of the subject are both good.
- Whilst assessment procedures are good, the results are not taken into consideration enough when planning work for higher achieving pupils.
- The support for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Whilst guided reading is well organised, aspects of silent reading are not as well carried out.

### **Commentary**

51. Standards in 2004 National Curriculum tests were below average at the end of Year 6. This was mainly because of a large number of pupils with special needs and the poor performance of a significant number of disaffected girls. Standards in Year 2 tests were well above average, in both reading and writing. Standards here have risen steadily since 2002.

52. Attainment on entry to the school in the area of communication, language and literacy is below average. When pupils leave the Foundation Stage of learning, their literacy skills are still slightly below average. Those pupils who achieve the nationally expected levels by the end of Year 2, achieve well. Those that reach a level beyond this, achieve very well. However, by the time pupils reach Year 6, achievement is rather more satisfactory than good. Although 77 per cent of Year 6 pupils achieve the expected level 4, this is still well below the national average. However, a very

significant minority of these pupils are summer born children who are very young for their year group.

53. During the inspection, almost all the current Year 2 pupils were judged as working at the appropriate level for their age for both reading and writing. About a quarter of those were working at above the expected level for reading, but not quite so many working above the expected level for writing. In Year 6 just over half were judged as working at the expected level, very similar to the results of the national tests for the previous year.

54. Pupils get good opportunities in most subjects to exercise their speaking and listening skills, although some pupils are much better at speaking than listening. Reading skills are promoted well, with good emphasis placed on phonic work. Successful sessions of guided reading were observed during the inspection. Sessions of silent reading were not as successful, with a number of the oldest pupils choosing not to join in with the activity.

55. Teaching and learning are good overall. They are clearly good in Years 1 to 3 and satisfactory elsewhere. Where teaching is satisfactory, it lacks the drive and enthusiasm of the good teaching. In an excellent lesson, seen in a Years 1 and 2 class, the whole approach of the teacher was exciting, stimulating and extremely productive. The pace of work was high and all pupils were keen to be involved. As a result standards here were well above national expectations. In some lessons, however, in spite of the good assessment procedures, some teachers did not make best use of the results in order to change activities to challenge all ability groups in the class. Too often work was only marginally different for the higher achieving pupils, lacking sufficient challenge. On the other hand, support for pupils with special educational needs was good in most lessons. At the same time marking was inconsistently completed. Where it was good, it helped pupils to see how they could make further progress. At other times it simply praised work.

56. The leadership and management of the subject are both good and have brought about effective improvement since the last full inspection. Good links are made with other subjects, although many classes lack displays of pupils' writing, which would encourage pupils further.

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

57. English contributes satisfactorily to other subjects across the curriculum. Pupils' speaking, listening and reading skills are well developed in all subjects. Although writing is being used in other subjects opportunities to develop basic skills in writing are not yet being implemented beyond basic levels. In Years 1 and 2 pupils write about their visit to Bath Abbey in connection with work in religious education. In Years 5 and 6 there is evidence of writing about Greek gods. However, in many classes, displays do not focus on writing activities. Instead a good deal of the available space is given up to art work.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve well in Years 1 to 4 as a result of consistently good teaching.
- Standards in Year 2 and Year 6 have risen above the national trend over the last four years.
- Teachers make good use of ICT to support pupils' learning in all classes.
- In Years 5 and 6, the pace of work is pedestrian and teachers do not have high enough expectations of what some pupils, especially girls, can achieve.
- Leadership and management are unsatisfactory.

### **Commentary**

58. Standards in Year 6 in 2004 National Curriculum tests were at the national average, although well below average when compared to other similar schools. The school's analysis showed that the disappointing 'similar schools' judgement owed much to the unsatisfactory achievement of girls. Nationally, in Year 6 boys do attain slightly higher standards than girls, but the difference at St Philip's is much greater, with boys attaining above the national average, but girls clearly below average.

59. Standards in Year 2 in 2004 were well above the national average and well above average when compared to other similar schools. The 2004 results were easily the best ever achieved by the school.

60. In Years 1 and 2 pupils achieve well. In these classes there is a significant and effective emphasis on developing pupils' basic number skills. Pupils in Year 2 respond very well to lively mental arithmetic sessions, where they show good progress in developing their ability to count on and back in 2s, 5s and 10s to 100. This good start is maintained in Years 3 and 4. The imaginative use of interactive whiteboards makes a significant contribution to the good progress pupils make. In a Years 3 and 4 lesson, for example, pupils developed their knowledge and understanding of angles through the use of software that took them carefully through key ideas. As a result they used correct mathematical vocabulary, such as degrees, rotation and right angles with confidence.

61. Rates of progress slow somewhat in Years 5 and 6, although levels of achievement overall are satisfactory. The pace of work is adequate, but work set for pupils is not always well matched to their prior attainments. Older girls, in particular, are too easily satisfied and have low expectations in terms of the pace and challenge of the work they complete.

62. Teachers make satisfactory use of the National Numeracy Strategy. Lesson plans are detailed and thorough and cover all aspects of the mathematics curriculum. The mental 'warm up' sessions at the start of lessons are handled well, often being stimulating and lively. In some cases too much time is spent on direct teaching and not enough on group and individual work, with the result that pupils do not have enough time to consolidate the skills learnt in the earlier part of the lesson.

63. Teaching and learning are good in Years 1 to 4 and satisfactory in Years 5 and 6. There are some consistent features to teaching across the school. Teachers usually present lessons in a lively, upbeat fashion that engages the interest of pupils. They explain new concepts clearly, using correct mathematical vocabulary carefully and this enables all pupils to take a full part in lessons. Teachers' use of the voice is skilful and intonation and phrasing are used well to sustain pupils' interest. Teachers' planning shows that careful thought is usually given to providing work over a wide range of ability in order to challenge pupils. This is especially the case with regard to pupils with special educational needs. The teaching and learning of these pupils is consistently good across the school. All pupils on the school's register of special educational needs have detailed individual education plans that set clear but challenging targets for these pupils. As a result their levels of achievement are good throughout the school. Teaching in Years 5 and 6 is satisfactory. However, the pace of work in these classes is pedestrian and, in some lessons, there was a lack of challenge for more able pupils.

64. Teachers keep accurate and often detailed records of pupils' work and, in most cases, these records are used to ensure that work is carefully based on pupils' prior attainments. The marking of pupils' work is satisfactory. Teachers use praise and encouragement effectively, but rarely give pupils a clear idea of what they need to do to improve further.

65. Attitudes to work are good in Years 1 to 4, but unsatisfactory in Years 5 and 6. Younger pupils approach their work with an infectious enthusiasm and work hard throughout lessons. In Years 5 and 6, pupils are obedient, but rarely approach their work with real commitment. A scrutiny of pupils' work in Years 5 and 6 over the course of the year shows that, while work is neatly presented, the amount covered is below that normally seen towards the end of the school year.

66. Teachers use ICT very effectively to enliven lessons and clarify ideas for pupils. However, pupils' use of ICT is weak, with little evidence, either in the lessons observed, or in the scrutiny of pupils' work, that ICT is used enough to support pupils' learning in mathematics.

67. The leadership and management of mathematics are unsatisfactory. As a result of staff absences the school does not presently have a substantive subject leader. Consequently, provision, although good overall, is too variable across the school and some weaknesses have not been addressed with enough rigour.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

68. Provision in terms of mathematics across the school is satisfactory. In history, for example, pupils use number lines to develop their understanding of chronology and in science pupils use weights and measures as part of their experiments.

### **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

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

- Standards in Year 2 are above national averages in this subject.
- Teaching in science is good across the school.
- Good use is made of teaching assistants and other adult support.
- There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- There is insufficient monitoring of science teaching and learning.
- Too little use is made of ICT to support and extend learning in science.

#### **Commentary**

69. Statutory assessment tests in 2004 showed standards to be below national averages overall in Year 6. When compared to schools in similar contexts standards are well below average. Teachers' assessment of pupils at the end of Year 2 in 2004 indicated that overall standards were in line with national averages. During this inspection, work done in lessons and a review of work on display and in pupils' books showed that standards of work are currently above national averages in Year 2 and in line with national averages in Year 6.

70. Four science lessons were seen in Years 3 to 6, where teaching is good overall. In a very good Year 3 lesson pupils learned how to describe, compare and place bones in the human skeleton, and how they are joined together to enable movement. The enthusiastic and stimulating teaching in this lesson ensured that all pupils were sufficiently challenged and fully engrossed in their interactive tasks, making good use of ICT technologies to support their learning. However, whilst good use is generally made of interactive whiteboards for whole class teaching, evidence of other science lesson observations shows

that very little use is made overall of computers to support and extend pupils' knowledge and understanding. This is a missed opportunity and an area in need of improvement.

71. Evidence indicates that pupils undertake a wide range of practical tasks and open-ended investigations. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are helped to understand the importance of fair testing and the manipulation of variables, demonstrating confidence in making predictions and discussing their findings. A review of pupils' books in Years 1 and 2 demonstrated the very extensive range and quantity of work pupils have undertaken across all attainment targets. Teachers' marking of pupils' work is good and constructive in Years 3 to 6. In Years 1 and 2 too little use is made of suggestions for helping pupils to improve their work.

72. Schemes of work provide a sound basis for progression. Work is satisfactorily planned, with regular assessment tasks and effective setting of work for pupils of differing prior attainment, providing good continuity. More able pupils are challenged well in science lessons across Years 3 to 6. Teaching assistants provide good support for pupils with special educational needs. Resources for science are good overall and the strong links with other local schools and universities enable good enrichment of the science curriculum.

73. The experienced science subject leader provides good support for her colleagues. Her knowledgeable leadership gives a clear sense of direction and she has a good understanding of the aspects of science which need further development across the school. However, no monitoring of teaching and learning in her subject has taken place over the past year and this situation needs to be remedied. Nevertheless, improvement since the last inspection is good.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Only one lesson, illustrating the direct teaching of ICT, was observed during the inspection. As a result it has not been possible to judge the overall provision in the subject, nor the standards pupils reach. In the same way it was not possible to judge the quality of teaching overall by the observation of one lesson. Although there is a full programme of ICT lessons across the school every week, almost all fell outside the timetable of the actual inspection.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers make very good use of ICT in the delivery of their lessons especially in literacy and numeracy.
- There is no assessment system in place to judge the standards of work against the levels of the National Curriculum.
- Improvements have been made since the last full inspection.
- Despite some productive initiatives since the last inspection, leadership is presently unsatisfactory.
- The computer suite is not ventilated adequately and is not utilised fully.
- The school is beginning to make links between ICT and other subjects.

### **Commentary**

74. All classes are equipped with interactive whiteboards. Following training earlier in the year, teachers are now making very good use of the boards as useful teaching aids. At the same time pupils are encouraged to use them during lessons to give explanations or to make contributions to discussions. For example in a literacy lesson in a Years 4 and 5 class pupils were invited to help the teacher to improve a piece of work on the whiteboard, written in a framework. Pupils are excited at these types of opportunities and are keenly motivated to use them. The school has developed one of its class spaces into a computer suite. Whilst



this is a move forward from the previous full inspection, when pupils had very limited access to computers, the room itself is poorly ventilated and gets extremely hot and uncomfortable. This may be the reason for the fact that the room was not used fully and was regularly free during the week of the inspection.

75. In the classrooms there are usually only two stand-alone computers. As one of these is often permanently used to drive the interactive whiteboard, the other computer is rarely used for classroom work.

76. Evidence of work completed in pupils' files saved on the school server, shows that pupils in Years 2 and 6 were working close to the requirements of the National Curriculum, although not all work is saved in this way. Younger pupils have used simple word processing programs together with simple paint programs. Older pupils have made multimedia presentations and have had opportunities to gather information from the Internet and send e-mails.

77. There is currently no clear assessment system which would show how well pupils are working against the standards noted in the National Curriculum. Whilst this need for development is noted in the subject action plan, there is no sign of it being in place in the near future.

78. A judgement about leadership and management involves a careful balance between some positive and negative evidence. On the positive side, the school has been commended for the quality of its provision and, by implication the effectiveness of management, by HMI (Her Majesty's Inspectors) in 2003, and more recently by the Local Education Authority (LEA). The school's own documentation shows a number of proactive initiatives. On the negative side, the school has had four different subject leaders over the last four years, making improvements difficult to sustain. In the last school year, the school has not had a substantive leader for ICT. As a result it would appear that provision is not as good as it was and current leadership is therefore unsatisfactory. However, ICT does feature prominently in the school's own development plan and a new highly qualified subject leader has been appointed with effect from September 2005. The school's capacity to improve is judged to be good.

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

79. The school is aware that its use of ICT across the range of subjects is not yet developed adequately. There are good signs of its use in literacy and numeracy, but even here, pupils use it far less than their teachers. In Year 6 pupils have used information gathered during a numeracy lesson to create a graph representing their favourite foods. Pupils make some use of the Internet as they carry out simple research for history or geography topics. In Year 2 they carry out simple art work in connection with a topic on the seaside in 1900. However, this use is not likely to improve until pupils have better access to computers in their classrooms and make more use of the computer suite.

### **HUMANITIES**

80. No overall judgement on provision in **history** or **geography** was made as only one history lesson was observed during the inspection. However, pupils' work was analysed in books, folders and on display around the school. In geography, pupils in Years 1 and 2 cover a study of the local environment thoroughly and most can use a map to identify local features in the community. The Barnaby Bear project is used effectively to develop an understanding of the wider world. The interactive whiteboards are used well to develop an understanding of the British Isles and, even in Year 1, many pupils can identify the different countries of the United Kingdom

accurately. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 undertake a more detailed local study, and a project in Years 5 and 6 on the rainforest demonstrated useful links with design and technology, science and ICT. In history, pupils have completed interesting and stimulating projects on the Victorians and, more recently, Ancient Egypt.

81. A weakness in work in both geography and history in Years 3 to 6 is the limited development of writing skills and the rare opportunities that pupils have to use ICT to support their studies. The scrutiny of pupils' work across the school clearly indicates that coverage in history and geography is at least satisfactory.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

As no lessons in religious education were seen during the inspection it is not possible to make judgements on the overall provision in the subject neither is it possible to make accurate judgements about the quality of teaching, learning or standards.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school has a good collection of books about religion.
- The subject gives good support to pupils' multicultural development.
- Over time the subject has been unsatisfactorily led.
- The current method of delivering the religious education curriculum places strain on the limited supply of artefacts and resources.

### **Commentary**

82. Some evidence of previously completed work was available during the inspection. This showed some lack of consistency between classes in the same year groups, in the amount of work completed, and the quality of the work.

83. As the subject has not been a focus of development over the last three to four years, and bearing in mind that during that period there have been four different subject leaders, it is not surprising that monitoring of standards had not taken place. Whilst currently the headteacher is covering the task of subject leader, there has been little continuity in leadership over time and therefore the developmental needs of the subject have not been addressed. This is understandable considering the school's overall position, but the problem needs to be addressed with some speed. The school is currently waiting to develop a new scheme of work which may support changes and improvements needed for the subject.

84. Planned activities strongly suggest that as pupils study Islam, Judaism and Christianity, they are gaining good support for their multicultural development. They appreciate different cultures, beliefs and customs, thus better equipping them to live in a multicultural society. However, currently plans show that the whole school tackles the same topic at the same time. This puts a strain on the limited resources kept by the school and means that there are rarely large displays of these artefacts in classrooms. There is a good range of written resources and the school is gradually making better use of resources from the Internet and from a resource centre. A further positive feature of resourcing is that pupils visit a mosque, a synagogue and a cathedral during their study of the three religions mentioned.

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

85. Three lessons in Years 3 to 6 were seen in **art and design**. Teaching was good in all three lessons. Two of these lessons were in Years 5 and 6 classes, where good teaching led to well motivated pupils studying and selecting details of artists' paintings to enlarge and depict using pastels on thick card. Pupils worked very carefully and enjoyed practising and improving their pastel techniques to produce pleasing work of a high standard.

86. There are many attractive art displays throughout the school. Work of pupils on display and in their folders and sketch-books was reviewed. This indicated that standards of artwork throughout the school are above the national expectations for this subject and pupils have opportunities to tackle a wide range of subjects in a good variety of media. Some particularly impressive pencil sketches have been undertaken by pupils in Year 2, carefully depicting subjects as varied as buildings, flowers and plants, and wheeled vehicles. These drawings showed very careful observation and confident use of pencil techniques.

87. In Years 5 and 6 pupils have produced a great deal of impressive and colourful artwork in various forms and have made very good use of their sketch-books to draw studies and practise techniques, such as shading and using a framework for drawing portraits in proportion. Resources for art and design are good and teachers' planning ensures good continuity and progression. Art is well used across the curriculum and provision in this subject is good throughout the school. However, the evidence indicates that there is insufficient attention paid to cultural diversity in art and design.

88. Only one lesson was observed in **design and technology**. In this lesson, the good teaching led to good learning about healthy eating, with Years 3 and 4 pupils planning nutritious and tasty sandwiches, based on their previous investigations. Design and technology work on display and in pupils' folders was reviewed and indicates that standards are in line with national expectations at the end of Year 6, and well above national expectations at the end of Year 2. Examples of work seen included some effective and well designed rainforest wall hangings made by Years 5 and 6, and a range of outstanding clay plaques, skilfully designed and made by Year 2 pupils to hang on their bedroom doors.

89. Two very good lessons were observed in **music**. In one Years 3 and 4 lesson the very good teaching skilfully introduced pupils to the difficult concepts of using a dot to lengthen a note, and identifying and performing 'off' beats. In this lesson pupils with special educational needs were very well supported and all pupils were fully motivated to achieve well, beating out rhythms enthusiastically with percussion instruments to reach standards above national expectations. In a very good Year 2 lesson the very good teaching enabled pupils to develop a clear understanding and use of techniques to vary musical dynamics when singing. Pupils were taught to sing in parts and to build in ostinato and echo effects with great skill and confidence, reaching standards well above national expectations for this age group.

90. A review of pupils' music work across the school indicated that standards were in line with expectations overall. However, there was very little evidence of musical composition in Years 3 to 6 and no evidence of any work involving the music of other cultures from across the world. These are areas in need of improvement. A new music scheme of work is being introduced and it is planned that this will raise the profile of music as a subject throughout the school.

91. Pupils' singing in assemblies is both tuneful and rhythmic and pupils sing with enjoyment. Several pupils have guitar and brass instrumental tuition and music therapy is an additional provision. A school choir meets weekly after school and prepares

performances for a range of audiences outside the school, including the hospital day-centre and a local pre-school. The choir enjoys busking for charity in the city centre.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory** with some good features.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school has developed a good scheme of work for the subject with helpful planning for teachers to use.
- The subject leader is enthusiastic and effective.
- Teaching of physical education is variable, but good overall.
- Pupils achieve standards that are at least in line with national expectations.
- Opportunities for pupils to take part in sporting clubs and to compete in sport are good.
- There are no procedures for assessing the standards of pupils' work against the expectations of the National Curriculum.

### **Commentary**

92. The school continues to provide its pupils with good experiences in many aspects of the physical education curriculum. The development of a new scheme of work and its very helpful planning sheets, enable the curriculum to be delivered well by nearly all teachers, with the result that most pupils achieve well. This includes pupils with special educational needs who are usually well provided for.

93. Pupils make good progress in swimming and achieve well, with virtually all pupils succeeding in swimming 25 metres by the end of Year 6. This is as a result of very regular use of a local pool and good quality teaching.

94. The use of professional coaches in Years 3 to 6 to support class teachers in the teaching of games, has improved the standard of pupils' games skills and has helped class teachers raise their own levels of expertise.

95. Gymnastics and dance are currently being developed and there are already signs that the quality of teaching and learning are improving. In a Year 2 country dancing lesson the very good knowledge of the class teacher and the enthusiasm of the pupils ensured that standards of previously learned skills and the learning of new steps were both very good.

96. Teaching and learning are good overall. Of the five lessons seen, one was very good, two were good and two were satisfactory. The key to the success in the very good lesson was that the teacher had very good subject knowledge, sustained the pace of the lesson at a high level, taught skills well, and was very well organised.

97. Subject leadership is good. The subject leader has ensured a wide range of after school sports activities, many of which lead to pupils participating in competitive events. This is the case for football, netball, tag rugby, basketball and dance. During the inspection Year 5 competed in a games afternoon with several other schools and won the trophy.

98. Accommodation for physical education is good, even though the playing field is not directly attached to the school. Resources are generally good and are well used.

99. The action plan, drawn up by the subject leader, reflects well the strengths and weaknesses of the subject and shows a clear vision for its development. It recognises that assessment is not yet in place and there are still some concerns about the teaching of gymnastics, not seen during the inspection.

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

Provision in personal, social and health education (PSHE) including citizenship is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The curriculum for this subject is good.
- There are many good examples of pupils showing their maturity in their school life.
- The school offers its pupils good opportunities to take on responsibilities and develop ideas of citizenship

### **Commentary**

100. The school has adopted a commercial scheme of work for this curriculum area and it is working well. It provides good planning and support material for class teachers. Teachers have had training in the use of circle time where pupils sit in a circle and discuss or play games to support their personal and social development. This is giving pupils good opportunities to discuss their problems.

101. Some pupils in Year 6 take on the role of playground buddies, helping to solve disputes and looking after vulnerable pupils. The idea started as an answer to a bullying problem and has been very largely successful. This shows a good level of citizenship. At the same time the school council provides some pupils with an opportunity to exercise some influence on the life of the school.

102. The school nurse helps older pupils in their discussions on health and sex education, whilst the scheme of work gives equally good support to understanding the problems of drug abuse.

103. Pupils take on charitable events in extending their citizenship to encompass other countries. They support a school in Kenya with clothes and books, and have written to members of the G8 group with their views on how African countries might be better supported.

## **PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS**

**Inspection judgement****Grade**

<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
How inclusive the school is	4
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	3

<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>4</b>
Attendance	4
Attitudes	4
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	4
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	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
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	4
The leadership of the headteacher	2
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).*