

# INSPECTION REPORT

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

Ashford

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 118760

Headteacher: Mr John Philpott

Lead inspector: Brenda Spencer

Dates of inspection: 13<sup>th</sup> - 15<sup>th</sup> June 2005

Inspection number: 267951

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:	5 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	212
School address:	Quantock Drive Ashford Kent
Postcode:	TN24 8QN
Telephone number:	(01233) 622 797
Fax number:	(01233) 665 922
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Chris Heather
Date of previous inspection:	January 1999

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

St Teresa's is an average-sized primary school in Ashford for pupils aged five to eleven years. Attainment on entry is average overall. Pupils' socio-economic circumstances are above average. The proportion of pupils receiving free school meals is below average. There are 212 pupils attending full time; 115 boys and 97 girls. Turbulence in the school population is below average; only eight pupils left and eight pupils joined the school last year outside the normal times of transfer. Nearly all pupils are White British. The majority of remaining pupils is of other White heritage together with a very small number of pupils of mixed, Indian or African heritage. There are no pupils at an early stage of learning English. Fifty pupils have special educational needs, with three having statements of special need. This is broadly in line with the national average. These special needs are predominantly related to specific learning, moderate learning and speech or communication difficulties. In 2000, the school gained the School Achievement award.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20451	Brenda Spencer	Lead inspector	Foundation Stage Science
9537	Caroline Marden	Lay inspector	
3574	Kawaljit Singh	Team inspector	English Geography History
28200	Paul Stevens	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology Music Physical education Special educational needs

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**St Teresa's Catholic Primary School is a good school.** The quality of teaching and learning is good. The leadership and management are good. Pupils are eager learners and staff take great care that all groups achieve well and thrive. The school provides good value for money.

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

- The leadership of the headteacher and key staff is good at improving the provision.
- Pupils achieve well overall and reach standards well above average in science by the end of Year 2 and in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6. Achievement in information and communication technology (ICT) and mathematics in Years 3 to 6 is very good.
- The ethos is caring and spiritual so pupils are keenly interested and behave very well.
- Teaching is very good at engaging pupils. Key skills are taught very well.
- Reception children have too little access to learning outside.
- Detailed care of pupils with special educational needs ensures they achieve well.
- Assessment data are used very well to provide targeted support to pupils.
- The arrangements for assessment of some subjects are too informal.
- Parents support their children's learning well so attendance is well above average.
- Parents receive too little information on the curriculum and their children's progress.

Improvement since the last inspection six years ago is very good. Major weaknesses have been addressed. For example, the curriculum and standards in science in Year 2 are much better. Provision for ICT is now very good. Most aspects of the school's work have improved, including pupils' behaviour and attitudes, the quality of teaching and learning, and leadership and management. Strengths in the care of pupils have been maintained.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

**The pupils' achievement is good overall.** It is very good in mathematics in Years 3 to 6 and in ICT across the school because of the quality of teaching and learning. Support for pupils with special educational needs is well targeted, consequently, they achieve well. Minority ethnic pupils number among the higher attaining pupils reaching above average standards in English and mathematics.

The current Year 2 reach standards which are above average. Standards are well above average in reading and science and improving in mathematics. Pupils' test results in reading and writing were above average in 2004. They were below average in mathematics and well above average in science. The current Year 6 pupils reach standards which are well above average in English and mathematics and above average in science and ICT.

The vast majority of children in Reception class achieve well overall. They are on track to meet most of the goals for their learning. They are likely to exceed them in attitudes to learning, reading,

number, and knowledge and understanding of the world. However, the limited use made of the outside means their control of large movements is weak.

**Pupils' personal qualities are very good.** Relationships are excellent, including racial harmony. Pupils are very keen to learn, behave very well and accept responsibility willingly. **Spiritual, moral social and cultural development is very good.** Attendance is very good and supports pupils' good achievement.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education and teaching and learning is good.** Pupils throughout the school benefit from very good relationships so the atmosphere in classes is conducive to learning. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is underpinned by very good subject knowledge so pupils are extended well. On the few occasions when learning is ineffective, the tasks have proved too difficult for pupils and they have struggled in Year 1.

The curriculum is good in Years 1 to 6. It is enhanced well through sporting activities and the provision of French. It is only satisfactory in Reception because of the lack of suitable outside provision. Provision for the key skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT is strong across the school. Pupils are cared for well so they feel secure and able to learn. They receive very good support and guidance. There are satisfactory links with parents and the wider community but links with the parish are strong.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management are good.** Strong teamwork of the headteacher and key staff has resulted in very good school improvement. They engage the support of external expertise, including the local authority, to good effect. Governance is good. Governors are very supportive and contribute to strategic decisions well. Statutory requirements are met.

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

Parents and pupils are very proud of their school. Parents value how well their children settle in, the quality of care and teaching, and the expectations to work productively. They would like to know more about the curriculum on offer and the progress their children make. Pupils enjoy their lessons, especially when these involve practical activities. They find other pupils friendly and trust adults to look after them well.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Meet the accommodation needs, especially outside facilities, of Reception children.
- Implement formal requirements for assessing and recording attainment and progress in subjects other than English, mathematics, science and ICT.
- Provide parents with more information about the curriculum on offer each term and their children's progress.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

Pupils' achievement is good overall. By the end of Year 2, standards are above average in speaking and listening, writing, mathematics and ICT. They are well above average in reading and science. Standards are well above average in English and mathematics and above average in science and ICT by the end of Year 6.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Key skills and knowledge of literacy, numeracy and ICT are strong across the school.
- Standards in science at the end of Year 2 are well above average and much improved since the last inspection.
- Reception children underachieve in physical development because of lack of provision.
- All groups of pupils achieve well overall, because of the attention paid to their needs.
- The curriculum and quality of teaching in ICT mean pupils throughout the school reach standards which are above average and they achieve very well.

#### Commentary

1. Most children enter school with average starting points in communication and mathematical development, but have good attitudes to school. They achieve well overall, particularly in learning the match of sounds to letters, knowledge of number and in many aspects of personal, social and emotional development. The vast majority of the current Reception class are on track to meet most of the expected goals for their learning. However, the restricted access to the outside means they make slow progress in developing control of large movements. The opportunity for children to make their own choices at the beginning of the day results in strongly developed independence. Many children are likely to exceed the goals for number, reading, knowledge and understanding and those for personal, social and emotional development.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.4 (14.7)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	15.6 (13.4)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	15.4 (16.1)	16.2 (16.3)

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

2. In Year 2, pupils reached standards in the 2004 national tests that were above the national average in reading and writing and were below average in mathematics. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels was above average in writing, average in reading and below average in mathematics. Compared to similar schools, standards were average in writing, below average in reading and well below average in mathematics. The proportion of pupils reaching the expected level in science, judged by teacher assessment, was in the top five per cent of schools. The proportion of those reaching higher levels in science was above average. The trend in the school's results was below the national trend. These test results demonstrate significant improvement since the last inspection in science, similar performance in reading and writing, and a decline in standards in mathematics.
3. Pupils in the current Year 2 reach standards in writing, mathematics and ICT which are now all above average. Standards are well above average in reading and science. This represents significant improvement in mathematics compared to recent years and reflects the success of

addressing this as a priority for improvement. Substantial effort has been made both by the school and the local authority to develop the teaching skills of new and inexperienced staff in Years 1 and 2 to good effect. Standards are rising. Overall, pupils achieve well because of a good curriculum.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	29.5 (27.0)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	28.8 (27.2)	27.0 (26.8)
science	29.7 (29.6)	28.6 (28.6)

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

4. In Year 6, pupils reached standards in the 2004 national tests that were well above the national average in English and mathematics and above average in science. Compared to schools with similar results at the end of Year 2, standards were well above average in English, average in mathematics and below average in science. The trend in the school's results was below the national trend and the fall in results in 2003 reflected lower starting points of that group of pupils. Compared to the last inspection, test results have improved in English and mathematics and have remained similar in science. The value added from Year 2 to Year 6 in 2004, measured by national tests, was well above average overall.
5. Pupils in the current Year 6 reach standards which are well above average in English and mathematics and above average in science and ICT. They achieve well overall and very well in mathematics and ICT. The analysis of data in English and mathematics is used to set appropriate targets for learning very well. Higher attainers in science have too few opportunities to pursue their own scientific enquiries and assessment procedures are not as well developed as in English and mathematics. Consequently, pupils of higher capability do not do as well in this subject.
6. Discussions with pupils, sampling of work and a few observed lessons suggest standards in geography and history, music, art and design, and physical education are in line with expectations by the end of Years 2 and 6. They are also in line with expectations at the end of Year 2 in design and technology whilst standards at the end of Year 6 appear to be above expectations. These subjects were not the main focus of the inspection.
7. Pupils' achievement is good overall. This arises primarily from the quality of teaching. In addition, breadth of application of ICT across the curriculum results in very good achievement in ICT. Very good teaching results in very good achievement in Years 3 to 6 in mathematics. Achievement in reading and writing is good overall in Years 1 and 2 and in English in Years 3 to 6. Pupils build well overall from average starting points. However, there is some inconsistency in the quality of teaching which affects progress in some lessons. This inconsistency is also evident in science but pupils benefit substantially from the curriculum, which is strongly rooted in practical experience, and consequently, they achieve well.
8. Children in Reception achieve well overall. They have many opportunities to develop their personal, emotional and social skills. Their rapidly developing knowledge of letter sounds supports their reading and writing well. However, they have too few opportunities to apply this in writing, for example, in role-play. They achieve very well in increasing knowledge of number but problem solving is weaker because of few opportunities to apply their knowledge. Whilst there is access to outside, this provision is not well developed and consequently, children do not achieve well in developing control over large movements. They achieve very well in using ICT because of the quality of the curriculum and a high standard of support from the specialist teacher.
9. The achievement of different groups of pupils is good. The relatively few minority ethnic pupils achieve well because of the encouragement they receive. Many are among the higher

attaining pupils, for example, achieving well above average standards at the end of Year 6. The needs of pupils with special educational needs are carefully reviewed. They receive good support in lessons and consequently achieve well. A high proportion of them attain the national expectations for English and mathematics by the end of Year 6. This partly reflects the beneficial emphasis the school places on these pupils developing their independence. Pupils learn to think creatively, even if they cannot fully express themselves in writing. However, teachers undervalue the importance of speaking skills in these pupils' learning. Both boys and girls achieve well. Differences in attainment of boys and girls arise from differences in starting points rather than inappropriate provision.

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

Personal development is **very good**. Pupils are caring and take their responsibilities seriously. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Attendance is also very good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils respond to the range and interest of school's provision with very good attitudes to work.
- Pupils respond to the school's excellent expectations with very good behaviour.
- The school promotes harmonious relationships, and pupils show very good care and respect for others.
- Very good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development enables pupils to treat other people and their environment with great respect.

### **Commentary**

10. Pupils' attitudes to school are very good. Pupils of all ages are both very keen to learn and to use their newly gained knowledge, understanding and skills to develop increasing independence. This was shown in a Year 2 lesson, where pupils were fascinated by Hindu Rangoli patterns as demonstrated on their computers. They proceeded to create their own ever more complex and colourful designs. In addition, pupils take advantage of the range of extra-curricular activities provided by the school. Pupils with special educational needs are regular participants and those who are gifted and talented find good scope for their capabilities in special clubs.
11. Pupils' behaviour is very good. The high degree of interest generated by teachers in their lessons, combined with very high expectations of their conduct, lead to these very good outcomes. Pupils enjoy the opportunity to contribute to classroom rules for behaviour and take the work of the school council very seriously. This, together with the warm, caring atmosphere created by staff, leads to very harmonious relationships. Pupils show great respect for people and property so that the school is a very pleasant place in which to work and play. The school deals effectively with a very small number of pupils who experience behavioural difficulties so that they have minimal impact on others' welfare. There have been no exclusions in recent years.
12. Pupils are very confident. Pupils with special educational needs have a high degree of self-esteem because of the way they are nurtured by the school. Pupils willingly undertake a good number of responsibilities including Year 6 watching over younger pupils in contexts such as assembly. They respond enthusiastically to opportunities they are given to speak about their work, for example, gifted and talented pupils prepare their own assemblies. As well as creating these opportunities, the school is very caring at times like bereavement.

### **Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

13. Pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are all very good. Pupils value everyone and show respect for people of all races, stating that we are all equal. Pupils, in their geography work, see the world from the point of view of other people, such as the Aztecs. They recognise beauty in Nature and have firm ideas of what they would eradicate if they had the chance, such as poverty, disease and terrorism. Pupils are clear about what they deem to be always right or always wrong. They understand the meaning of democracy and look objectively at people’s different views. Pupils make a significant contribution to the social organisation of the school through a variety of duties and the school council. Within the arts, pupils appreciate the poetry and music from this and other countries. This sometimes leads to dance such as when a class is studying Africa. They read stories from different cultures. Older pupils speak French and learn about France. Pupils study different ways of life in other countries, often through the Internet, and use the work of artists such as Matisse to inspire their own artwork. Where there are pupils from another country, teachers ask them to give first-hand accounts of life there.
14. Pupils’ attitudes and behaviour have improved since the last inspection, as have spiritual, social and cultural development. Strengths have been maintained in moral development.

**Attendance**

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	3.9	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.*

15. The high level of attendance is the result of a number of factors. The parents’ strong commitment to the school means that the majority avoid taking holidays in term time. Pupils also find lessons fun so they want to come to school. The school has appropriate systems in place to monitor attendance and to follow up any unnotified absences.

**QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

The quality of education is good. Teaching, learning, the curriculum and the quality of care are all good. Links with parents and the wider community are satisfactory. There are good links with other schools.

**Teaching and learning**

The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. It is good in the Foundation Stage, good in Years 1 and 2 and very good in Years 3 to 6. Assessment and its use to inform planning are good.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Very good relationships and positive strategies result in very good behaviour.
- Key skills are taught very well and consequently pupils make good progress.
- Experienced staff in Years 3 to 6 employ a very good range of strategies in their teaching.
- In Reception, teaching methods promote the development of good personal skills.
- Sometimes, the match of task to pupils’ capability is not appropriate and pupils struggle.
- Most often, teaching assistants are used well in Years 1 to 6 but sometimes, at the beginning and end of lessons and when new topics are introduced, they are not productively employed.

**Commentary**

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 26 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
2	6	14	3	1	0	0

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

16. The quality of teaching and learning has improved since the last inspection. In particular, the proportion of good and excellent teaching has doubled. Parents and pupils are justified in appreciating the quality of teaching.
17. Throughout the school, there is a very conducive atmosphere to learning. The expectations for good behaviour are high and behaviour was never less than good in any lesson observed, most often, it was very good. Pupils respectfully listen to one another. Lessons are interesting and the balance of input and activity is well judged. Consequently, pupils are eager to get on with their work. In Reception, the organisation of the day sets children up well. On arrival, they choose their own activities and the consequent motivation to learn continues when they take part in activities chosen by the teacher later in the session. This organisational strategy means children are highly independent and eager to pursue their own enquiries.
18. Teachers' subject knowledge in literacy, mathematics and ICT is strong, especially so in Years 3 to 6. In English and mathematics, teachers use assessment data well to help pupils improve their weak areas of learning. Teaching points are well explained and the activities pupils do help them consolidate their learning. In Reception, emphasis is given to developing children's ear for discriminating sounds and so their knowledge of the match of letters and sounds develops well. This feeds into good attainment in reading. In ICT, the specialist teacher enthuses pupils with interesting work. Her excellent subject knowledge ensures this work is rigorous and challenging.
19. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 is impressive. It is not confined to specific subjects but reflects the range of very effective strategies teachers use to enthuse, instruct and challenge pupils. Consequently, pupils reach standards which are well above average in English and mathematics. Teachers use ICT and resources well to support understanding. Stimulating questions and opportunities for pupils to share ideas in pairs result in well thought out answers. Practical activities engage pupils, for example, making Greek food, or considering the effect of wind resistance by running in a group holding a parachute. Resources are always well prepared and the flow of the lessons means the pace is energetic. It is inevitable that pupils' attitude to learning is very good.
20. Provision in Years 1 and 2 has been subject to upheaval in the two years prior to the inspection. This situation is now stabilised with the appointment of two newly qualified staff over the last two years. The substantial input of advanced skills teachers and of the school team and mentor is ironing out the inconsistencies which come with inexperience. This relates to overtaxing pupils with too challenging tasks so that they struggle or by covering too much ground in a lesson. However, the strength of the curriculum on offer, for example, in science, is helping pupils to achieve well.
21. Children in Reception achieve well. The warmth of relationships results in an emotional security, which forms a good basis for learning. Children are not provoked into distracted behaviour by overlong sessions on the carpet. Much learning is underpinned by first hand experience, such as tasting the exotic fruit or by making a hat featured in a favourite story. The use of careful observational assessment ensures children take part in tasks matched to their capabilities so that all achieve well. At present, the potential of the environment outside the classroom is not exploited to the benefit, particularly of more active children.
22. Teaching assistants most often provide valuable support in lessons. This is especially the case for pupils with particular needs. However, sometimes, at the beginning and end of

lessons or when a new topic is introduced, the role of teaching assistants is limited. Opportunities are missed for them to contribute to assessment, for example, by making observational notes of pupils' contributions. Where the role was effective, teaching assistants quietly supported pupils to participate in discussions.

23. Teachers work with the special educational needs co-ordinator to prepare detailed individual plans for pupils where necessary. These plans are kept at hand so that teachers can monitor pupils' progress. Most support is given within the classroom so that pupils with special educational needs feel included in the class's everyday learning. However, some pupils' learning is enhanced by very beneficial attendance at the local special school. Through close liaison with class teachers, teaching assistants provide very good support to give pupils confidence and raise their self-esteem.
24. Overall, the systems to assess standards of attainment are good; they are very good for English, mathematics and ICT and satisfactory for other subjects. All performance data is analysed rigorously and is used very well to track progress and set individual targets in English, mathematics and science. Additional support to improve standards further is provided within lessons and in booster classes. Pupils' performance is regularly tested and records of their achievement are kept. Teachers mark pupils' work well identifying strengths. However, they do not consistently give pointers for improvement.
25. Pupils are given opportunities to self-assess. This shows teachers what their pupils have understood and what they are trying to learn. Systems for assessment in non-core subjects are not fully established. Consequently, it is difficult for teachers to have a clear picture of when and if there is a need to make changes in the curriculum to improve provision.

## **The curriculum**

Curriculum provision is satisfactory in Reception class and is good for Years 1 to 6 pupils. The range of extra activities outside lessons is good. Accommodation and resources are good, but there are shortcomings in the accommodation for Reception children.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school has made very good progress since the previous inspection. The curriculum is well planned, and now very well meets the needs of all groups of pupils.
- There is a very good provision for pupils who have special educational needs.
- Use of literacy and numeracy skills across subjects is good and use of information and communication technology is very good.
- Lack of outdoor space for Reception children impinges on their physical development.

## **Commentary**

26. For pupils in Years 1 to 6, the school provides a curriculum that is interesting, relevant and promotes good achievement for all groups of pupils. The school has made very good progress since the previous inspection. Deficiencies in the science curriculum for Years 1 and 2 pupils have been rectified and now the curriculum is very good. The teaching time in Years 3 to 6 classes has been improved and now meets the national recommendations. The teaching time is used well and all subjects receive appropriate time. Provision for multicultural curriculum has very much improved and is very good now.
27. The Foundation Stage curriculum is used to plan activities in all six areas of learning for children in the Reception class. Children's independence is supported very well by a curriculum which values child-initiated activity. Through song and regular input, children develop a good ear to discriminate sound. This supports the reading and writing curriculum well. Good emphasis is given to developing knowledge of number but there is too little emphasis on applying this knowledge in problem solving. The curriculum to promote physical

development does not give children adequate opportunities to develop large muscle control. The outside provision is limited across the areas of learning.

28. French is taught from Years 4 to 6. Pupils use their literacy and numeracy skills well in other subjects. Books in other subjects such as geography and history are well used to promote literacy. The curriculum for ICT is much improved. Pupils use their ICT skills very well in all subjects. For example, very effective use was made of computers in literacy, numeracy, art and design, and design and technology work to extend learning. The programme for personal, social and health education is good and is underpinned by the school ethos of respect and care based on the Catholic Faith. The sex and relationship programme of education in line with Catholic beliefs is implemented well.
29. The range of extra-curricular activities to make learning more interesting is good. Year 6 pupils go on a residential visit and this has a positive impact on their social development. A range of clubs in sport, French and music is offered. Pupils value these clubs and the attendance is good. Pupils enjoy visits from various storytellers, authors and drama groups.
30. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Pupils enjoy the benefits of the broad curriculum with its balance of academic and creative subjects. They also use programs such as 'Spellchecker' to help improve their literacy standards. Pupils who are gifted and talented have good opportunities to flourish. There are a number of 'specialist' clubs and groups such as Irish dancing, design and technology, and playing orchestral instruments. They have the opportunity to stretch themselves during events such as a 'Science Week', and in philosophical discussions. Pupils create their own assemblies and perform in concerts.
31. The school has a strong commitment to ensuring equal access and opportunity for all its pupils. They receive a curriculum that is exciting and promotes good achievement. Pupils get good opportunities to gain confidence about their own and others' cultures through celebrations of festivals, history, geography, literature, art and music.
32. The teachers and teacher assistants are effectively deployed and they work very well together to provide good quality education and this has a positive effect on pupils' achievement and attainment. The accommodation is good, and is enhanced by engaging displays of pupils' work. This stimulating learning environment adds positively to pupils' desire to learn. However, there is no suitably developed outdoor area for Reception children. This limits children's learning especially in physical development.

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

The school takes good care of its pupils and provides them with very good support and guidance. There are good procedures for taking pupils' views into account.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Information about pupils' progress is very well used to target extra support for those pupils who need it.
- Good systems are in place so that pupils can make their views known.
- There is very good pastoral support.

### **Commentary**

33. The good level of care and support seen in the last report has been maintained.
34. Procedures to ensure pupils' health and safety are good. Risk assessments are carried out for visits outside school and governors regularly visit the school to check for any hazards. Child protection procedures are securely in place and there is good guidance for staff on how to deal with any concerns they may have.

35. Staff know pupils and their families very well and provide very good pastoral care. Parents and pupils both recognise this and pupils are confident that staff would help them if they had any problems. The school goes out of its way to support families in difficult circumstances and has bought in additional support to help develop parenting skills.
36. Procedures for monitoring pupils' progress in English and mathematics are very good. This information is used very well to identify pupils who need extra help and then to provide the relevant support. This contributes to the good achievement of all groups of pupils. Parents and guardians of pupils with special educational needs are very involved with interviews about their children's progress and in the formulation of special learning plans. Consequently, they give their children very good support and they achieve well.
37. Good induction procedures for children into the Reception class include visits before the children start school so that they know the staff and have their worries allayed. A particularly valuable feature is that on the first two days the children are in school the parents settle their children in the class and then have coffee in the hall. Staff then report back to the parents how well the children have settled and so parents do not worry during the day. Induction procedures for children who join other year groups are satisfactory.
38. The school and class councils provide pupils with a good forum to express their views. In response to the pupils' wishes, locks have been fitted to toilet doors and a ball-free day has been introduced for lunchtime. The school also ran a 'general election' campaign in May with pupils forming their own parties and campaigning on a platform relevant to the school. The party that won wanted school uniform relaxed for boys in the summer so that they could wear polo shirts without ties. This is awaiting consideration.

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

Partnership with other schools is good. Partnership with parents and links with the local community are satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents are very supportive of the school.
- Partnership with other schools contributes well to curriculum development and the quality of teaching and learning.
- The school provides parents with insufficient information about what their children are studying.
- Reports on pupils' progress often concentrate too much on pupils' attitudes.
- Good links with the parish support the work of the school.
- There are no established links with local business.

### **Commentary**

39. Partnership with parents and the community remains satisfactory since the last inspection.
40. Parents are very supportive of the school and value the education it provides for their children. They actively support their children with their homework and are prepared to provide costumes for events such as Greek Day. In addition, the parents' association raises considerable amounts of money to improve the resources of the school. Recently, this money has been used very effectively to improve provision for ICT. Currently, they are raising money to improve the outside environment for the youngest children in the school. The school values this support and the headteacher and teachers are readily available to parents if they have any concerns.
41. The range of information for parents is satisfactory, with the prospectus and annual governors' report giving clear information about the school. However, there is little information about what

pupils will be studying on a termly basis. Some parents say they would like this information to enable them to support their children's learning more effectively. Reports on pupils' progress and attainment are satisfactory overall but the quality is very inconsistent. In the best reports, parents are provided with clear information about what their children know and can do in all subjects and areas for development are identified. In others, with the exception of English, mathematics and science, there is too much emphasis on pupils' attitudes to the subject and progress is not explicitly reported.

42. The school has developed a number of effective links with other schools. It is part of a cluster of Ashford schools that work together to provide professional development for teachers and help to develop the curriculum. An example of this is the development of modern foreign languages in the school by working in partnership with a local specialist secondary school. Pupils also take part in sporting events with other schools and this contributes to the standards reached in sport and their personal development.
43. The close links with the parish support the pastoral work of the school and pupils' religious education. The parents' association is very involved in the parish and there is a joint summer fete. Links with other members of the local community are very limited. The last inspection reported that there were limited links with industry and this remains the case. The school uses the local environment to enhance pupils' learning. For example, during the inspection, pupils were preparing to conduct a study to find out what effect the railway was having on the environment.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are good overall. The leadership and management of the headteacher and key staff are good. The governing body carries out its statutory duties well and provides good strategic direction to the school.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The leadership and management of the school are strongly collegiate.
- External expertise is used very well to improve the school.
- The workload of some staff is too heavy.
- Induction of new staff is highly supportive.
- Criteria in the school improvement plan are not precise enough to evaluate outcomes.

### **Commentary**

44. The quality of leadership remains similar to the last inspection. The effectiveness of management and of governance has improved.
45. The headteacher and deputy form a good partnership, providing complementary talents and qualities, which enables pupils to flourish academically and emotionally. The leadership of the school is strongly collegiate. The teamwork and mutual support are highly valued by staff and enable them to work with a sense of common purpose. External expertise, in the form of advanced skills teachers, school improvement partner and 'expert headteacher' input, is also used very well to judge provision, support co-ordinators and improve the quality of teaching and management.
46. Management is good. Analysis of data is used very well to identify gaps in provision. This informs the school improvement plan, which provides a focused and relevant agenda for change. However, the criteria by which to judge the success of planned actions are expressed too vaguely to act as adequate measures, for example, for governors to use to evaluate progress. However, the school's efforts are clearly rewarded. Standards in science at the end of Year 2 and the curriculum are much improved since the last inspection. Low standards in mathematics have been addressed. Co-ordinators are effective and have a clear

understanding of the action to take to continue improvement. The workload of some staff is very heavy. The present distribution of subject co-ordination responsibilities was undesirable but unavoidable because of the influx of temporary and newly qualified staff. However, as stability in staffing is now established, the workload should be rectified urgently to ensure all staff have an appropriate and sustainable level of responsibility.

47. The co-ordinator for special educational needs, who is the headteacher, provides very good leadership and management. He monitors the good communication between all those responsible for giving the pupils support. The governor for special educational needs works closely with the school and reports back to the governing body. The school budgets well to provide pupils with the resources they need. Full consideration has not been given to allocating a regular slot in the school improvement plan for this aspect of the school's work as part of the monitoring process.
48. Professional development and performance management are good. Both are targeted to whole school and staff's personal development priorities. Following two years of unprecedented staffing change in Years 1 and 2, an induction programme for newly qualified teachers was revitalised. Aided by the local authority, the school provides much appreciated support to inexperienced teachers in refining their skills and gaining consistency in their effectiveness. This support has reversed the fall in standards resulting from staffing difficulties in recent years.
49. Governance of the school is good. Governors have good systems in place to ensure they fulfil their statutory responsibilities and to gather first hand information about the work of the school. They are committed to self-improvement and as a result of reviewing their practices they formed a strategic review group. This group very effectively sets the priorities for improvement and monitors the school's progress in meeting them.

## Financial information

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	505,550
Total expenditure	502,907
Expenditure per pupil	2,350

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	7,144
Balance carried forward to the next year	9,787

50. Financial management is good. The tight budget is allocated to support development priorities and carefully monitored to ensure solvency. The available funds make the school's commitment to using qualified teachers to implement workforce reforms difficult to sustain beyond the current financial year. Principles of best value are implemented well overall. Comparisons are made with the standards of similar schools to identify where improvement needs to be made.
51. The teamwork of staff and governors, the good opinion of parents and pupils, and the very good use of external expertise mean the school is well placed to improve overall.

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

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

Provision in the Foundation Stage is good overall. Findings are similar to those of the last inspection in most respects. Most children enter school with average starting points in communication and mathematical development, but have good attitudes to school. Effective arrangements are made to settle children. However, parents of younger children would like an additional meeting to discuss their child's progress. Staff work well as a team. Assessment is good and used well to tailor the provision to children's needs. Consequently, all groups of children, including those with special educational needs, achieve well. The accommodation and resources are unsatisfactory. Whilst there is access to the outside, its potential is not exploited and there is no shelter. This is a priority on the school improvement plan. Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are good.

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

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

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

- Children have high levels of concentration and interest in their activities.
- Their awareness of the culture of others is not sufficiently developed.
- Children are highly independent.

#### **Commentary**

52. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children achieve well. The day is well structured. Children chose their activities on arrival, are immediately engaged and sustain this interest. Teaching is responsive to children's own enquiries, for example about flags which encouraged designing and making them from a variety of materials. Consequently, children are highly independent and eager learners. Pupils' awareness of other cultures is underdeveloped as it does not feature strongly in the curriculum. Children are on track to exceed the goals for their learning.

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

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

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

- Knowledge of sounds and letters is developed very well, providing children with a good foundation to learn to read and write.
- Respect given to children's views enables them to express their views confidently.
- The potential of role-play is not exploited for children to apply their writing skills.

#### **Commentary**

53. The quality of teaching and learning is good and children achieve well. They enter school as confident speakers but with limited vocabulary. The rich opportunities for discussion and the focus on this aspect of learning ensure children make good progress in speaking and listening. Very effective work on developing children's ear for different sounds of letters means their knowledge of the match between letters and sounds (phonics) develops very well. This, together with a stimulating range of stories and puppet work, results in most children reaching the goals for reading and several exceeding them. Teaching models the writing process well. Some children independently apply their phonic knowledge to their writing and compose simple short sentences. However, there are few opportunities for children to practise their

writing skills outside focused activities, for example, in role-play. Most children understand the function of punctuation they encounter in reading. Children are on track to meet the goals for their learning in most respects by the end of the Reception Year. Many are likely to exceed the goals in reading.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children's knowledge of number is developed very well.
- There are too few opportunities for children to apply their mathematical skills and knowledge.

### **Commentary**

54. Teaching and learning are good and children achieve well. Knowledge of number is advanced. Most children count to 20 and backwards. A substantial number of children count in fives and 10s up to 50 and 100. Strategies such as silently saying the missed number help children to count in twos. Most recognise numerals up to 10 and beyond. They use the comparative language of size when ordering their peers in a line by height. Assessment is used well to group activities according to children's ability and consequently all achieve well. Opportunities to apply knowledge and skills are limited so children's problem solving skills are not as well developed as other aspects of mathematical learning. Most children are on track to meet the goals for their learning, except in number, which they are likely to exceed substantially.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- ICT skills are very advanced.
- Understanding of the world is rooted in sensory and practical experience.

### **Commentary**

55. The quality of teaching, learning and achievement is good. Children's explorations are promoted through first hand experiences, for example, cutting up, smelling and tasting the exotic fruits in the story 'Handa's Surprise'. Skills in ICT are very advanced because of very good teaching and a rich curriculum. Visits are used well to promote children's understanding of the environment, for example, to a local farm. The opportunity to initiate activities means confidence to choose tools and techniques in making and designing develops well. Most children are on track to exceed the goals for their learning.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in physical development is **unsatisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children have too few opportunities to practise larger movements.

### **Commentary**

56. The quality of teaching, learning and achievement is satisfactory. Achievement is unsatisfactory in developing control and co-ordination of large movements. It is good for small muscle control. Children use a good range of different tools to develop fine control, for example, the computer mouse, paintbrushes, construction materials, scissors and pencils. Handwriting is developing well. They create effective designs on the computer to musical stimulus. They do not have enough regular opportunities to run, balance, throw and catch and consequently standards are lower than they should be. There are limited resources to use outside the classroom and the potential of the outside is not exploited. Most children are on track to meet the goals for their learning for small muscle control but not for larger movements requiring control and co-ordination. Overall, standards are below average.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in creative development is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Stories and practical experiences provide a good stimulus for children's expressive work.
- Role-play is not exploited sufficiently to promote expression of children's own thoughts and feelings.

### **Commentary**

57. The quality of teaching, learning and achievement is satisfactory. Most children are on track to reach the goals for their learning by the end of the Reception Year. ICT is used well to explore colour and shape. Children are encouraged to respond to stories and practical experiences such as cutting up fruit by painting and making artefacts. Role-play is insufficiently promoted. Consequently, few children take the opportunity to act out and explore their own ideas and feelings.

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

### **ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

#### **English**

Provision in English is **good**.

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

- Effective strategies implemented in Year 2 have improved standards in reading.
- More emphasis is needed in improving pupils' skills in linking letter sounds to make words to improve spelling.
- Tracking of pupils' progress, analysis of data and its use are very good.

#### **Commentary**

58. In National Curriculum tests in 2004, Year 6 pupils' results were well above the national average and that of similar schools. Standards of the current cohort are similarly well above average. Year 2 pupils' results in 2004 tests in reading and writing were above average. The standards of the current cohort in Year 2 are well above average in reading, and above average in writing and speaking and listening. The school analysed all performance data and identified that pupils' comprehension skills in non-fiction are not as well developed as in fiction books. The school has implemented successful strategies such as using non-fiction books in literacy lessons and this is improving standards. Pupils need to develop skills to link phonics to build unfamiliar and more complex words. This will improve their spellings.

59. Pupils' achievement is good. Pupils who have special educational needs are well supported and achieve well in relation to targets set in their individual education plans. Boys and girls achieve equally well. The small number of minority ethnic pupils is highly motivated and achieves similarly to their peers.
60. Younger pupils' standards in speaking and listening skills are above, and older pupils are well above, the expected levels. Many structured opportunities are provided for pupils to discuss work in pairs, and to ask and answer questions in class lessons that are successful in improving speaking and listening skills. When asked, pupils explain their work confidently and eloquently. Pupils are given opportunities for public speaking in class lessons, assemblies and annual drama productions such as 'Joseph and his amazing multicoloured dreamcoat'. Pupils have good vocabulary and language skills to discuss their work confidently.
61. Pupils' achievement in reading is good and standards are well above the national average throughout the school. Recently implemented strategies have been successful in improving standards for Year 2 pupils. Year 3 pupils whose standards were too low in Year 2 have been given very good additional support and have made very good progress. Pupils read fluently and understand the text very well. They explain what they have read and predict what is likely to happen in a story. By the end of Year 6, pupils interpret text very well and understand the subtleties and humour in the books. Pupils use inference and deduction skills very well to answer questions, as was seen in Year 4 class. Pupils discuss the work of different authors and explain their preference for a particular author. They skim and scan the text and make meaningful notes to retrieve information. Pupils use the library and the Internet very well for research purposes.
62. Standards of Year 2 pupils in writing are above average and achievement is good. Pupils write for a range of purposes. However, more emphasis is needed for pupils to link letter sounds to make words to improve their spelling skills. Pupils write neatly and in joined script. Year 6 pupils' standards in writing are well above average and they achieve well. They write for a range of purposes, using, for example, narrative and descriptive writing. Their play scripts, autobiographies, biographies, letters, poems, articles for newspapers and non-chronological reports are of a high standard. Their handwriting skills are very good and most write neatly, clearly and legibly.
63. The quality of teaching and learning is varied in Years 1 and 2 classes and is overall good. For older pupils in Years 3 to 6, overall teaching is very good. Teachers have very good subject knowledge, and their demonstrations and explanations of tasks keep pupils' interest. Very good questioning stimulates pupils' thinking. The interactive whiteboard is used very effectively to demonstrate lessons and explain work. Behaviour in lessons is very good and, as a result, lessons are taught at a very good pace without any interruptions. Teaching assistants are used effectively to support pupils who have special educational needs. Where some teaching is only satisfactory, it is because the work given is inappropriately challenging for some pupils, which hinders progress, particularly in Year 1.
64. Teachers assess their pupils' work well and set appropriate targets. Marking of pupils' work tells pupils what is good about their work. However, pointers for development are not consistently given to inform pupils on how to further improve their work. All pupils' progress from Years 1 to 6 is rigorously assessed, monitored and tracked. The school makes very good use of information from tests to set targets for improvement for both teachers and pupils.
65. The co-ordinator provides good leadership and manages the subject well. Staff are supported well through monitoring of planning, lessons and pupils' work. All performance data is rigorously analysed and used very well to improve teaching, learning and standards. The school's progress since the previous inspection is very good. The provision, pupils' achievement, teaching and learning, and leadership and management have improved.

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

66. The provision for literacy across the curriculum is good. Computers are used very well to draft or word-process text. Good use is made of literacy skills in mathematics, art and design, design and technology, science, geography and history.

### **Modern foreign languages – French**

67. The subject was sampled and was not a main focus of the inspection. No reliable judgements can be made about the quality of provision.
68. Year 4 to Year 6 pupils are taught French one lesson per week. The school is planning to start teaching of French for all its pupils from September 2005. One lesson in Year 5 and teaching in the lunchtime club were observed. In the lesson, the teaching and learning and pupils' achievement were very good. The teacher had very good subject knowledge, taught the names of animals in French and ensured pupils learnt correct pronunciation. Pupils used their previous learning very well to combine names of colours and those of animals to make sentences. The teacher had very good rapport with pupils and this encouraged a positive attitude to learning another language. Learning is also very well extended in the French club, which is open to younger pupils.

### **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

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

- Very good teaching and pupils' enthusiastic application to work is raising standards.
- Very good systems for assessment inform planning.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced with very good cross-curricular applications.
- Provision for special educational needs is very good.
- Very good resources support teaching and learning.

#### **Commentary**

69. In the national tests for Year 2 for 2004, the percentage of pupils attaining the expected standard was below the average for pupils nationally and well below the average for pupils in schools with a similar intake. The percentage attaining the higher level was also below the national average, and well below the average in similar schools. In the national tests for Year 6 for 2004, the percentage of pupils attaining the expected standard was well above the average for pupils nationally and above the average for pupils in schools with a similar intake. The percentage attaining the higher level was above the national average, and in line with the average in similar schools.
70. Pupils' attainment in the current Year 2 is above the national average. This represents good achievement. Pupils know how many halves and quarters make a whole. They tell the time to the half hour and interpret simple block graphs. Pupils measure to the nearest centimetre and recognise line symmetry. More capable pupils change improper fractions to mixed numbers and know the properties of many two-dimensional shapes. Pupils' attainment in the current Year 6 is well above the national average. This represents very good achievement. Pupils divide large sums of money and calculate ratios, proportions and percentages. They make shapes from co-ordinates in four quadrants and understand probability.
71. The quality of teaching is very good overall. Teaching in classes in Years 1 and 2 is good. Here lessons captured pupils' interest, often with games such as 'Beat the Shark', which they won by giving the properties of two-dimensional shapes in less than 30 seconds. The good-humoured cheers showed their pride and enjoyment. Pupils learn well through close collaboration. In one very good lesson, they had to work out how to fit triangles together to cover a sheet with no gaps. Teachers use their interactive whiteboards most successfully to

reinforce learning. Sometimes, pupils sit too long without being active when being taught a new idea. As in the older classes, the teaching assistants enable pupils with special educational needs to achieve well, so that all pupils are included. Teaching in classes in Years 3 to 6 is very good. In one excellent lesson, the teacher placed great emphasis on pupils learning by talking. This was used either to collaborate or to explain their difficulties to the class when creating an exact square metre. Pupils find lessons so interesting that they behave very well because they are totally absorbed in the challenge presented to them.

72. Currently, a temporary co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership and manages the subject well. Consequently, teamwork continues to raise standards. She has worked with the staff to place greater emphasis on extending more capable pupils. However, whilst there is a very thorough and informative system for assessing and tracking pupils' progress, they are not kept fully aware of the targets they need to set themselves in order to improve. Teachers are not fully consistent in setting homework. The curriculum covers the expected programme very well, although pupils have few opportunities to undertake open-ended investigations.
73. There have been very good improvements to the subject since the last inspection which have greatly benefited pupils' learning.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

74. There are many examples of teachers enhancing pupils' learning through the use of mathematics. In design and technology, pupils carefully measure their ingredients for cooking. Local geographical surveys of shop usage have led to comparisons through graph-work. Pupils learn about the properties of two-dimensional shapes by working out the computer commands needed to create them on the screen.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The curriculum places a very strong emphasis on developing pupils' investigative and experimental skills.
- Improvements are very good since the last inspection in standards, assessment and the curriculum in Years 1 and 2.
- The curriculum does not provide enough scope for higher attaining pupils to pursue their own scientific enquiries.

### **Commentary**

75. Pupils throughout the school achieve well in science. Minority ethnic pupils, girls and boys and pupils with special educational needs achieve similarly to their peers.
76. In 2004, assessment results at the end of Year 2 show the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level was in the top five per cent of results for all and similar schools. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher level was well above the national average and above average for similar schools. Teacher assessments and inspection findings for 2005 indicate standards are well above average. This represents very good improvement since the last inspection when standards were below average and pupils' progress was unsatisfactory.
77. In 2004, the proportion of pupils in Year 6 reaching the expected level was in line with the national average but well below pupils with similar prior attainment. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher level was above the national average but below average for pupils with similar prior attainment. However, the comparisons with similar schools based on prior attainment require caution as assessment and the curriculum in Years 1 and 2 was deemed

unsatisfactory by the last inspection. The attainment of the current Year 6 is above average building from average starting points in Year 2. Standards are similar to the last inspection.

78. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good. Whilst effective teaching and learning is evident across the school, consistency is more evident in junior classes where teachers are highly experienced. Where learning was unsatisfactory in one lesson, the curriculum was engaging but the task was too difficult for many pupils to tackle successfully. Teaching places good emphasis on developing scientific skills. The curriculum is very practically based, particularly in Years 1 and 2, and in Years 3 and 5. This compensates for any inconsistency in teaching and supports younger pupils' learning very well. The improved curriculum has contributed significantly to the rise in standards at the end of Year 2. Consequently, by Year 6, pupils confidently describe how to set up an investigation, measure outcomes and draw conclusions. Pupils' excitement and interest in science arises from encouraging teaching and engaging activities. Interpretation of data is taught well and is a strong aspect of pupils' learning. Pupils' work is generally above average in Years 3 to 6; however, higher attaining pupils are given too few opportunities to pursue their own enquiries. This limits their achievement. Good emphasis is given to developing pupils' scientific vocabulary but sometimes predictions which are correct are more likely to be explored than others. This misleads pupils about the nature of scientific process which may involve following a blind avenue in the pursuit of enlightenment. Planning is much improved since the last inspection with the adoption of national guidance. This ensures pupils make good progress. Pupils have good opportunities to apply their literacy and numeracy skills in recording their findings. The use of sensors in collecting data needs greater emphasis.
79. The co-ordinators provide good leadership and management. They have improved the curriculum and assessment and this is ongoing. The agenda for change is apt and based on good analysis of provision. They make good use of local authority expertise to keep the curriculum, standards and assessment under review. Overall, improvement since the last inspection is good.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Very good teaching and pupils' positive attitudes are continuously raising standards.
- Teachers' planning is very well supported by the co-ordinator and high quality resources.
- Teachers enhance pupils' learning by enabling them to apply their computer skills in a wide range of contexts. Consequently, their confidence grows very well and their knowledge is very broad.

### **Commentary**

80. Pupils' attainment is above average at the end of Years 2 and 6, which is very good achievement. Most pupils in Year 2 are independent in using a very wide variety of skills and programs. They very confidently use the Internet to explore Hindu Rangoli patterns before creating their own. They are very competent in manipulating text, data and graphics to create their own layouts of facts and their own stories. Pupils create their own maps with symbols to show an imaginary planet and understand how to instruct a robot to move in a certain pattern. Pupils in Year 6 develop these skills to make more sophisticated layouts and illustrations for a newspaper, for example. They use spreadsheets to cost a Christmas party for themselves, and make multi-media presentations of their activities on a residential course.
81. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. The specialist uses her excellent subject knowledge both to provide expert instruction and to develop pupils' increasing independence on the computer. Consequently, pupils are exceptionally keen to learn, to challenge

themselves to improve and to be very creative in their use of visual effects. They never exhaust their determination to find what they are searching for on the Internet, such as when they plan an ideal holiday in detail.

82. The co-ordinator provides very good leadership and management. She liaises closely with the specialist teacher to ensure that all pupils have access to the best possible programme for their development. Consequently, pupils with special educational needs achieve well. The co-ordinator has introduced a rigorous system for assessing pupils' attainment and tracking their progress. The information gained ensures both that pupils' individual needs are met and that any gaps in the curriculum are removed. Examples of pupils' work from each year-group provide a very good basis for monitoring the school's progress and developing standards.
83. The curriculum is very good in providing an exceptionally wide variety of experiences. Pupils benefit greatly from regular access to computers in the school's well designed suite. Teachers have received thorough training in the use of newly introduced programs and resources. They use an interactive whiteboard to enhance pupils' learning in a visually exciting way. The school has developed its own website where, for example, it celebrates pupils' achievements with examples of their work. Year groups take turns to enjoy a computer club, which adds to their very good attitudes.
84. There has been very good improvement since the last inspection.

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

85. The use of ICT across the curriculum is very good. Pupils use the Internet to carry out research from Year 1. This includes studying scientific matters and Hindu Rangoli patterns for their art and design. Pupils make graphs and spreadsheets as part of their mathematics and combine word-processing and graphics as part of their literacy. They construct time-lines as part of their history and compose music using a special program. These are only a few of the many examples of ICT benefiting pupils' learning.

#### **HUMANITIES**

**Geography** and **history** were sampled. Only one lesson in history was observed. A scrutiny of pupils' work and displays indicates that standards in history and in geography are average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and National Curriculum requirements are met well. Year 6 pupils go on a residential visit and this enhances their learning in geography. No judgements on overall provision, teaching and learning, and progress since the previous inspection are made.

86. In a Year 3 **history** lesson, teaching and learning were excellent and pupils were learning about Ancient Greek civilisation and comparing it with the life in Greece today. All pupils and staff were dressed as ancient Greeks. One group used the outdoor playground to hold 'Olympic Games'. Competitions were held in discus and javelin throwing. Excellent use of numeracy skills was made when pupils used trundle wheels to measure the distance of throws. Pupils were very excited and stimulated by this inspirational teaching.
87. A group of pupils tasted Greek food. The teacher explained the health and safety rules very well and gave pupils the option of tasting and not tasting foods such as stuffed vine leaves, taramasalata, yoghurt, cheese pasties, olives and Greek salad. The other group learnt to make stuffed vine leaves and cheese pasties. Excellent use was made of resources and very good links were established with physical education, numeracy, design and technology, literacy and geography.

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

**Art and design**, **design and technology**, **music** and **physical education** were sampled. No lessons were observed in art and design, design and technology, and music. A carousel of mixed Years 5 and 6 basketball, cricket and team games was visited. Samples of work were examined.

Pupils in Years 2 and 6 were interviewed. This did not provide sufficient evidence to make reliable judgements about provision.

88. Evidence suggests that attainment in **art and design** at the end of Years 2 and 6 is in line with expectations. Pupils experience the expected range of media, and develop their ideas with computer work. They learn from visiting artists and from studying the work of Matisse and others. Three-dimensional work includes wire figures and effective clay gargoyles. Evidence suggests that attainment in **design and technology** is in line with expectations at the end of Year 2 but above them at the end of Year 6. In one particularly well taught project in Year 6, pupils made musical instruments. They researched the structure of different examples relating what they learnt to the scientific properties of the materials. They produced very detailed accounts of their designs and made careful measurements. In this way, they extended their learning through the use of their English and mathematical skills. They evaluated their products and made appropriate improvements. Evidence suggests that attainment in **music** and in **physical education** is in line with expectations at the ends of Years 2 and 6 in all aspects of the subjects. Most pupils swim at least 25 metres by the end of Year 4. Co-ordinators for all four subjects lead and manage them satisfactorily. However, there is no consistent system for assessment and recording pupils' progress which could be used to improve planning.

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

Personal, social and health education was sampled: no discrete lessons were observed but planning was scrutinised. Evidence was insufficient to make an overall judgement about provision, standards, achievement or teaching.

89. The school's programme for personal, social and health education is good. It is taught through the 'Fully Alive' scheme of work recommended by the Diocesan Board. Family love and valuing relationships with friends are taught. Growing in the community and social responsibility of looking after the environment form part of the programme. In assemblies and in class lessons, pupils' success is celebrated as they receive wide-ranging awards for achievement and personal development. This greatly enhances their confidence and self-esteem and promotes very good relationships.
90. The school is a part of the 'Healthy Eating' project. Provision to develop citizenship through school and class councils is very good. On the general election day, school parties were formed for election that discussed school issues. Pupils were quite discerning in their choice of candidates. Pupils are encouraged to think about those who are less fortunate and showed empathy, for example, towards those individuals in the Tsunami disaster. There are appropriate class rules and pupils' behaviour was excellent in many lessons. The school's very good Catholic ethos contributes positively to pupils' development as effective citizens as well as to their personal and social education.

## 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	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
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	2

<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	4
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
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	4
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).*