

INSPECTION REPORT

**ST TERESA'S RC PRIMARY SCHOOL, LITTLE LEVER,
BOLTON**

Little Lever

LEA area: Bolton

Unique reference number: 105247

Headteacher: Mrs Diane Bohan

Lead inspector: Mrs June Tracey

Dates of inspection: 25 – 27 April 2005

Inspection number: 267953

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary
School category: Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils: 4 - 11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 139

School address: Redcar Road
Little Lever
Bolton
Lancashire
Postcode: BL3 1EN

Telephone number: 01204 333163
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Appropriate authority: Governing body
Name of chair of Ms Denise Kelly
governors:

Date of previous inspection: 4 May 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St Teresa's is a voluntary aided school that is smaller than the average-size primary school. Its Christian mission is linked to the parish church and the community it serves. There are 140 pupils on roll of ages 4 -11. Most live in the parish; a few come from further afield. The proportion of pupils who join or leave the school at other than the usual times is about average. The percentage known to be eligible for free school meals (9.3 per cent) is broadly average. The school is situated on a single site. Attainment on entry to compulsory education is average for the vast majority of pupils. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is below average; the proportion with statements of need is average. Pupils' needs include specific and general learning difficulties and physical disabilities. The great majority of pupils are of white UK origin. A small number come from other ethnic groups. There are no children for whom English is not the first language.

The school was designated a Beacon School in 2003. It is still continuing with aspects of its outreach work.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20270	June Tracey	Lead inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology
9520	John Leigh	Lay inspector	
30724	Delia Hiscock	Team inspector	Science Music Physical education Foundation stage
12060	Pat Peaker	Team inspector	English Geography History English as an additional language Special educational needs

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

St Teresa's is a very effective school. Pupils achieve very well academically and in their personal development. They respond well to the very good teaching. Pupils of all abilities, needs and backgrounds gain in confidence and maturity as they progress through the school. Currently, standards are well above average in Year 2 and above average in Year 6. The school is very well led and managed and provides very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- provision for the Foundation Stage, English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT) is very good
- the exciting climate for learning encourages pupils' curiosity and keenness to learn
- the integration of non-core subjects for the infants is creative and demanding; this approach could profitably be extended to the junior classes
- the Christian mission is reflected in the high level of care for every pupil and links with the parish
- procedures for assessing pupils' attainment are very good; they ensure that regular checks are kept on pupils' progress throughout the year
- the commitment, loyalty and team spirit of governors, teachers and non-teaching staff put the children's interests ahead of any other consideration
- strategic plans for the school's development are reviewed and updated on a regular basis to take account of national initiatives and local circumstances
- pupils' understanding of other religions and cultures is good; their awareness of the lifestyles of other ethnic groups in Britain's multi-cultural society is satisfactory but could be developed further.

The school has made very good improvement since the previous inspection in May 1999. It has resolved the issues relating to the marking of pupils' work and coverage of the national curriculum for ICT. In addition, standards of work have risen in Years 1 and 2, the quality of teaching has improved further and the school has involved itself more in outreach work in the community, initially through its designation as a Beacon School.

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*	A	A	C
Mathematics	A	A*	C	E
Science	A	A*	C	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.*

Overall, **pupils achieve very well.** Children make very good progress in the Foundation Stage, which prepares them well for the next stage in their education. Most achieve and often exceed the goals expected of them, particularly in personal, social and emotional development. Pupils continue to achieve very well in the infant stage. Currently, standards in Year 2 are well above those expected in mathematics and science and above average in reading and writing. In Year 6, standards are well above average for pupils' age in science

and above those expected in English and mathematics. This represents very good progress for this year group because their test results in reading, writing and mathematics in 2001 were low due to disruption and discontinuity in their learning at that time. Pupils' results in national tests taken in Year 6 were well above average in English, mathematics and science in 2002 and 2003, the trend being above that found nationally. Results were not as good in 2004 because the class increased significantly in size with the addition of pupils new to the school whose prior attainment was significantly below that normally expected for their age. They made good progress, but not enough to reach the standard of other pupils in the class whose performance was similar to that of previous year groups. Hence, the school's results in 2004 compared with schools with similar prior attainment at Year 2 in 2000 were not an accurate reflection of pupils' work. Pupils with special educational needs and those with particular talents achieve as well as other pupils because the work in lessons is well focused on what pupils need to do to advance their learning. Standards in ICT are above average in Years 2 and 6. Pupils use the technical skills they acquire to complement work in other subjects. **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.** It manifests itself in pupils' very good attitudes, behaviour and relationships. Attendance is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is very good. Pupils' personal development is supported by a very good system of links with the home and external agencies. **The overall quality of teaching and learning is very good.** Teachers' planning caters for flexibility within lessons. Pupils are provided with plenty of opportunities to reason things out for themselves and to learn from their own mistakes. This promotes confidence and encourages pupils to be adventurous and independent in their learning. It also leads them to self-assess their work and make comments on how to improve it. The school provides a very good range of activities, both within and beyond the curriculum. Extra-curricular activities take account of pupils' suggestions and the school does its best to provide for them. Pupils benefit from sampling activities that lead to a fuller life and which can form the basis for leisure pursuits. The participation rate is high.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are very good. Expectations are high and the clear sense of direction unites staff and pupils in a commitment to fulfil the school's mission. The school is very well managed. It provides stable routines that help pupils to feel secure and to gain satisfaction from achieving the realistic targets set for them. Governors execute their role well, seeking information from the school where necessary and challenging its thinking on critical decisions.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents' response at the meeting and in the questionnaires indicates that they are very satisfied with the school and the way it tailors the provision to pupils' personal needs and ability. Parents have no significant concerns. They like the way children learn to respect and value each other. Pupils are equally positive about the school. They particularly value the extent to which their views are sought and acted upon.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- build on the exciting developments in the curriculum in the infants to blend non-core subjects together creatively in the junior classes;
- develop further, pupils' awareness of the multi-cultural society in which we live.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds, including those with special educational needs, achieve very well throughout the school. Currently, overall standards are well above average in Year 2 and above average in Year 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well overall because of their very good attitudes and response to interesting and challenging teaching.
- The strong emphasis on the development of basic literacy, numerical and ICT skills provides pupils with a good grounding for work in other subjects.

Commentary

1. Overall, children's attainment on entry to the Foundation Stage is average. They achieve very well in the mixed-age class in their first year at the school. They bond together as a group and grow in maturity as they mix with and try to emulate the work of the older pupils in the Year 1 group. By the end of the year most have reached the early learning goals set for children of their age in the designated areas of learning. A considerable number of the children exceed them.
2. Pupils' results in statutory tests taken in Year 2 in 2004 were well above the national average in mathematics, above it in reading and similar to it in writing. The results represent a significant improvement in all three subjects over those of previous years, particularly in mathematics. Not as many pupils exceeded the level expected for their age in writing as in reading and mathematics. The school implemented an action plan this year to improve writing further. Evidence from the inspection indicates that this has already had an impact. Standards in the current Year 2 are well above average for pupils' age in mathematics and science. They are above average in reading and writing. The more able pupils exceed the expected standards for their age because they work at a faster pace in response to greater challenge. Pupils achieve very well overall from their starting point because they react well to well-directed and inspired teaching.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	16.8 (16.1)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	14.9 (13.7)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	18.0 (15.8)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 20 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3. In 2004, pupils' results in national tests taken in Year 6 were well above the national average in English and average in mathematics and science. In previous years, the results were consistently well above average in each of these subjects and the overall trend was above that found nationally. The dip in results in 2004 was due to the lower

level of performance of a small but significant group of pupils who joined Year 6 having had various difficulties in other schools. Most made good progress at St Teresa's but they had too much to catch up to reach the standards expected for their age in the time available to them. Standards in the current Year 6 are well above average in science and above average in English and mathematics. This represents exceptionally good achievement considering that their attainment in tests in Year 2 in 2001 was well below average in reading, writing and mathematics. Throughout the school there is no significant difference in achievement between boys and girls.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.6 (29.4)	26.9 (26.8)
Mathematics	27.4 (30.3)	27.0 (26.8)
Science	29.2 (32.4)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 29 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

4. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress in relation to their prior attainment. They make particularly good progress in literacy, where the good support in class ensures their active participation and helps them to learn, use and consolidate important basic skills. They make very good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans.
5. The school has successfully implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Because the school has adapted them to suit the specific needs of the class groups year-on-year, pupils gain confidence in their ability to use the skills competently and appropriately as well as rising to the challenge of tackling the unfamiliar. The school consciously promotes the development of pupils' reasoning skills and encourages learning through trial-and-error techniques. Overall, pupils' literate and numerical skills are above average in Year 6, which gives them a good start to secondary education.
6. Evidence from the inspection indicates that pupils' work in ICT is consistently above that expected for their age in Years 2 and 6. Pupils achieve very well from their starting point on entry to the school because they have a thorough grounding in the basic skills. Standards in ICT have improved since the previous inspection because pupils now achieve similarly in all the programmes of study in the National Curriculum. Pupils' work was sampled in other subjects. Indications are that standards are at least average for pupils' age in all subjects.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Pupils mature very well during their time in school and personal development is cultivated through every aspect of the school's provision. This maintains the standards found by the previous inspection. Attendance is good, which is an improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has very high expectations of conduct, which pupils' respect and aspire to.

- Pupils' relationships with others are very good. They contribute to the harmonious school community.
- Pupils have a desire to learn and an enthusiastic approach to all their work and activities.
- The school's Christian ethos contributes very well to pupils' spiritual, social and moral development. Pupils' awareness of the ways of life of different ethnic communities is not as well developed as their knowledge of different religions.

Commentary

7. The school does all it can to promote good attendance. From being slightly below the national median in 2003/04, attendance is now much improved and above average. The lower attendance last year was mostly due to the non-attendance of a few pupils who were new to the school's roll that year. External agencies were involved in following up the circumstances. Pupils and parents are well aware of the importance of good attendance. Parents give reasons for absences, usually without being prompted. This has resulted in a significant reduction in the number of unauthorised absences. Most pupils arrive promptly and pupils are quickly into their learning.
8. Pupils like school very much, feel secure and are enthusiastic. Happy faces are a characteristic of the school and most pupils say that learning is fun. They show a great deal of interest in their work, involving themselves fully in what the school provides. For example, in a good lesson in a mixed Reception/Year 1 class, children were making juice from oranges and clearly improving their understanding about hygiene and healthy eating in a most enjoyable way.
9. Pupils with special educational needs have very good attitudes to school. They grow in confidence and self-esteem in response to very good achievement.
10. Pupils behave very well and demonstrate self-control because teachers and other adults have very high expectations of behaviour. Inappropriate behaviour is always challenged, with the result that there is little disruption to learning. Any incident involving potential bullying or racial harassment is investigated thoroughly. Pupils' relationships with others are very good. They take care of their own and others' property and take pride in their school. There were no exclusions last year.
11. Pupils grow in confidence as they progress through the school. Older pupils are articulate, express their views well and delight in talking about their work. For example, in a House meeting, pupils were impressive in the way that they debated, with great maturity for their age, the reason for and content of healthy snacks. They were developing a very good sense of democracy as they put their points of view. Opportunities for discussion in large mixed-age groups, such as House meetings, help pupils to become more self-assured and to listen to others. Pupils engage very well in the range of responsibilities given to them and carry them out willingly and with pride.
12. Pupils' spiritual, social and moral development are all very good. Pupils gradually become more self-aware and gain an understanding of the world and their own value and worth. Questions of faith are raised and pupils can use their own personal experiences to make connections with the beliefs and attitudes that different faiths portray. Prayer is an ever-present feature of school life and pupils are asked for prayer requests. The spiritual ethos underpins the work of the school exceptionally well. Pupils have a good understanding of feelings and emotions and their likely effects on

others. They show concern and compassion for those less fortunate than themselves. They understand and discuss school rules, can distinguish right from wrong and understand the consequences of their actions.

13. Pupils' cultural development is good. They are introduced to world faiths in their religious education lessons. Through subjects such as art and music, they learn to appreciate the work of renowned artists and musicians from other cultures. Pupils understand that there is a diversity of cultures in this country, but their awareness of the different ways of life of the various ethnic communities could be developed further.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.2	School data	0.5
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education, based on teaching and the wide-ranging and interesting curriculum, is very good. There has been good improvement in provision since the previous inspection. Pupils' all-round personal and academic development is well supported by a very good pastoral system that underpins all aspects of the school's work.

Teaching and learning

Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is very good. Assessment procedures are used very effectively to guide planning for lessons and to check that pupils are on track to achieve realistic targets matched to their ability and prior attainment.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very good teaching in the Foundation Stage is a significant factor in children's very good progress in their first year of compulsory education.
- Very good teaching, and pupils' response to it, contribute to pupils' development as independent learners. They successfully learn to transfer and apply skills to other subjects in the curriculum.
- Good use is made of ICT, both in class teaching and in cross-curricular work.
- The information gained from assessment procedures is used very well to ensure that pupils are suitably challenged and that there is a rapid response to any underachievement.

Commentary

14. Teaching and learning are very good in the Foundation Stage. Children settle quickly into the mixed-age Class 1 because communication and the development of interpersonal relationships are woven into the aim of every lesson and activity. Consequently, children are receptive to new opportunities and learning experiences. They thrive in the busy, varied and productive atmosphere that sustains their interest

throughout the whole of the day. They gain in confidence from being encouraged to take the next step for themselves, even if they do not succeed at first.

15. The overall quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 and Years 3 to 6 is very good. The school is aware that the discontinuity in teaching this year in the class for lower juniors has adversely affected their progress to some extent, for example in mathematics. The situation is being monitored very carefully to ensure that pupils have a secure understanding of this term's work. The teaching for pupils with special educational needs is well focused on the targets in their individual learning plans, which are clear and realistic. The success in the teaching of these pupils lies in the way teachers present new work, carefully getting over the concept, reinforcing the idea and then giving pupils the chance to apply their new learning in group work. Good communication between teachers and teaching assistants ensures that the work is well planned and assessed. Throughout the school, planning of lessons takes account of pupils' differing levels of ability and builds on their prior attainment.
16. Two excellent lessons were observed, in music and mathematics. In the former, in the Reception/Year 1 class, the integration of literacy, choice and appreciation of music engrossed pupils extremely well. It resulted in performance that was emotional, but controlled. The key to the high quality of the mathematics lesson in Year 5 was the shrewd preparation for a problem-solving exercise and the teacher's willingness to 'let go' at just the right time so that pupils could work things out for themselves. Pupils of all abilities responded well to the teacher's high expectations.
17. The quality of the teaching is secured by teachers' very good knowledge of the subjects and their ability to present it in an appealing way that makes pupils want to learn more. Teachers positively encourage pupils to be good listeners, which helps them to respond sharply and accurately without fuss or the need for repetition. The very good management of discipline, based on respect, produces a learning environment in which pupils flourish. This is particularly important because the school is open-plan throughout, so teachers and pupils are constantly aware of what is going on around them. Teachers have developed good strategies for encouraging pupils to have confidence in themselves and to understand that they can learn through making mistakes or through 'trial and error'. The interactive whiteboards used for class teaching in many lessons are particularly useful because the technology provides pupils with an immediate visual response to variables that they put into the situation under discussion. Other factors relevant to progression in pupils' learning include the school's drive to encourage pupils to think for themselves, reason and self-assess the results. Evidence of this was seen in lessons, sometimes through subtle lesson planning and, at others, through teachers' explicit discussion with the pupils about how well they were achieving. The good quality of marking contributes to pupils' understanding of how to improve their work further. It is thoughtful and constructive, recognising effort and setting challenge. The quality of marking has improved since the previous inspection when it lacked consistency.
18. Assessment procedures throughout the school are very good. They are systematic and analytical, readily accessible to all teachers and easy to use. Pupils' progress towards set targets is tracked regularly throughout the year so discrepancies are picked up quickly and acted upon before concerns become problems that affect learning and progress. The school's assessment system has evolved from work connected with the Beacon School initiative and is frequently shared with other schools in the local education authority.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 29 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	14	9	4	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.

The curriculum

The curriculum is very broad, rich and exciting. It embraces a very good range of activities. Children are at the heart of the experiences provided. Pupils make suggestions about activities for inclusion in the wide range of opportunities available outside the school day. These make learning great fun and frequently stretch pupils' brains and muscles. The accommodation is good. The outdoor space is becoming a valuable source of learning through which the school builds on what the children achieve in the classrooms. Resources are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is something for every child in the activities that enrich each day,
- Very thoughtful provision for personal, social and health education (PSHE) helps pupils to make perceptive decisions and choices about life.
- Planning for the integration of non-core subjects in Years 1 and 2 is very good. It successfully encourages pupils to think about the features of each and their effect one on another. The wholeness of this approach is not as obvious in Years 3 to 6.
- The seamless move for pupils from each stage of their studies to the next means that the momentum of their learning is smooth and productive.

Commentary

19. Changes and improvements in the variety and quality of the activities the school provides have kept pace very well with those seen nationally. The inclusion of French in Years 3 to 6 was a popular move that has captured pupils' interest. This is an aspirational school, committed to self-evaluation and improvement. Many of the developments are planned with the pupils rather than simply for them. This makes for a vibrant curriculum that has turned mixed-age classes into a strength. In non-core subjects, the older pupils in each class benefit from having to explain themselves explicitly; the younger ones benefit from seeing the quality of work to aspire to. A common strand in lessons, in particular those for PSHE, is the way teachers include and listen to all the pupils, then act spontaneously on their specific needs in that session. The contrast of activities, such as the vigorous physical exercises that pupils revel in to refresh themselves, contribute to their learning and very good achievement. Planning of activities for infant classes blends ideas and skills across subjects such as geography, history and the creative subjects, often through all-embracing topics such as, currently, China. This worthwhile approach builds very well on the school's effective use of literacy, numeracy and computer skills in other subjects as well as the work of the Foundation Stage. The school is set to plan for a similar integration of studies in these subjects for the junior pupils.
20. Provision for children in the Reception class is very good. The six areas of learning are thoroughly interlinked. Children learn at a rapid pace and have plenty of

opportunities to explore for themselves, invent games and investigate exciting objects and resources, which they do confidently and trustingly.

21. Provision for children with special educational needs is good. Adults are very well briefed and know the right level of challenge and support to give without making the work too easy. As a result, pupils learn robustly and join in the additional activities they choose for themselves.
22. Very close links with nearby schools, and especially the high schools, build bridges that help pupils to make the leap to the next stage of their education with ease and confidence. This means that they do not lose pace in their learning. Some of the shared experiences are designed to challenge pupils who have a special talent in a subject but the sessions provided benefit everyone. Outdoors, new resources for scrambling, sitting and observing nature widen pupils' interests and prompt inventive games. Exciting visits, visitors and clubs help all the children to enjoy school and to squeeze as much as they can from each experience.

Care, guidance and support

The steps taken to ensure the care, welfare, health and safety of pupils are very good. Support, advice and guidance based on monitoring are very good. This maintains the qualities noted by the previous inspection. The school provides very good opportunities for pupils to express their views. Pupils receive good feedback, with reasons, on the extent to which they have influenced any subsequent action.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Every child is treated well as an individual. The school provides very good support and guidance for pupils of all abilities, needs and backgrounds.
- Pupils' personal and academic development is closely tracked so that any slippage is detected quickly and rectified.
- Induction arrangements for new pupils are very good. They help children to settle in without undue worries.

Commentary

23. Child protection has a high profile and every child's interest is central to all the school does. Any concerns are handled sensitively, effectively and promptly. Teachers and non-teaching staff are vigilant and always work in the best interests of pupils to safeguard their welfare. Child protection is underpinned by effective procedures.
24. The school and governors work hard to ensure that pupils work in a healthy and safe environment. All reasonable steps are taken to keep pupils safe and protect them from injury or ill health. Procedures are effective and regular inspections of school premises are carried out. Risk assessment is conducted regularly with appropriate recommendations implemented. For example, staff assess and manage risk when children go on trips by making visits prior to the event. A very comprehensive Disability Audit has been carried out.
25. The school provides a secure, supportive, caring environment where pupils feel happy and content. Every child is seen to matter greatly in this school, as is clearly evident in the trust pupils have in the staff and the way individual success, however small, is

genuinely celebrated by others. Pupils are confident that there is an adult they can turn to if they need help of any kind or re-assurance.

26. The school cares well for a small number of Traveller children. Teachers have regard for the likelihood of discontinuity in their previous learning and provide work that enables them to build up their skills progressively. During the time that they spend at the school, most make good progress even though the standards achieved are sometimes below those expected for their age.
27. The school has very good procedures to monitor pupils' personal development and academic progress. These have a significant impact on the development of pupils' personal qualities and standards of achievement. Pupils are rewarded for being kind, thoughtful and making an effort as well as for good work. Staff meet the needs of each pupil very well because they have very well-informed strategies to develop fully the potential of every pupil. Pupils understand the consequences of anti-social behaviour and consciously endeavour to avoid it. They are being helped to become increasingly independent, self-confident and knowledgeable about themselves and about healthy and safe living.
28. The care and support for pupils with special educational needs are good. The school's values are well reflected in the way that these pupils are given opportunities to take part in all school activities. Teachers keep very good records of their progress as they move through the school.
29. In discussions with pupils it was evident that they feel their concerns are taken seriously by the school. Each pupil belongs to one of four Houses. This system works very effectively to give pupils a real voice in school affairs. Questionnaires seeking pupils' views are analysed, and used in planning. The suggestion boxes are used readily by all, sometimes anonymously, to communicate any worry or concern.
30. Induction arrangements for the youngest children ensure that all are assured of a caring and sensitive beginning to their school life. This is based on very good opportunities for parents and their children to get to know the school, supported by good information and home visits. Thorough assessment of each child ensures that potential problems are identified early. Links with nurseries from which the children are drawn are very productive. A sign of the well-planned transition to compulsory schooling is that children leave their parents very happily at the start of each day.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's partnership with parents and other schools is very good. Links with the community are good. These judgements are similar to those made when the school was last inspected.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very good links with parents support learning at home and encourage children's progress.
- Links with the church are strong and add to the spiritual dimension of the school's work.
- Links with other schools and the wider educational world are very good. They enable schools to discuss and share the best practices.

Commentary

31. Parents are very well informed by regular, well-presented newsletters. They have very good opportunities to receive information on their child's progress. The annual written reports are sufficiently detailed, enabling parents to understand what their children do well and where improvements could be made. Targets are set, for example to practise reading at home in order to become more fluent and expressive. Information for parents whose children have special educational needs is very good.
32. The school encourages a strong partnership with parents based on mutual trust and confidence. Parents are consulted on issues such as the anti-bullying policy. The school is an open-door environment, very welcoming to parents, which results in very good relationships with most parents. Parents are very committed to the school and a good number provide help in the school, which is greatly valued. Most parents are confident to approach the school if they have concerns. The school provides regular information on what topics are to be covered in each subject so that parents can prepare to involve themselves in their children's learning. A good range of events is organised for parents, such as the Family Learning courses, to help parents understand how and what their children will be taught and how they can help them at home.
33. A group of parents form the School Support Group. It is active in promoting the school's interests.
34. Very strong links with the church ensure that the school's ethos is firmly founded in Catholic beliefs. The school joins in church services and parishioners often help in school. The priest is a frequent visitor and is well known by all pupils. Links with the church contribute greatly to pupils' spiritual development.
35. The school uses the local community well to support learning through visits to local shops, amenities, countryside, canal and industrial history sites. A good range of visits from people in the local community helps pupils to understand the work they do and how society works.
36. Links with the secondary school to which many pupils transfer are very productive. They include visits by pupils, supported by good information and carefully worked out arrangements to ensure that pupils are well equipped for the next stage of their education. Staff liaise about the curriculum so that the secondary teachers have a true understanding of pupils' prior learning and the targets that have been set. There are good bridging projects and opportunities for gifted and talented pupils to work on open-ended challenges. Particularly impressive is the contribution the school makes to the partnership with the local cluster of schools, where it has shared examples of good practice in assessment. The school has effective links with a local special school whereby pupils join St Teresa's for some lessons. This is successfully broadening pupils' understanding of how able bodied and disabled people can work together to mutual benefit.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall quality of leadership and management is very good. The leadership of the headteacher is very effective. It is backed up well by very good management systems that translate policy into effective practices that directly influence pupils' achievement. The school is well governed. It provides very good value for money.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The leadership and management of the school inspire confidence, which ultimately leads to above average standards of work and very good achievement.
- The school is reactive in responding to initiatives that further its work and that of others in the locality.
- The school is self-critical. It responds quickly to concerns highlighted by its monitoring systems and incorporates them for regular review in the self-evaluation process.

Commentary

37. The headteacher manages the school very well with a clear vision for its future and thought for the workload of the staff. Leadership of both the headteacher and senior staff is very good. The deputy headteacher is currently seconded to the associate headship of a school needing help with senior management. She keeps in regular contact with staff and pupils at St Teresa's and is readily available to give advice on aspects that were her specific responsibility, such as Year 6 and the co-ordination of mathematics. Teachers and non-teaching staff are proactive and ambitious for the school. Many have a number of responsibilities, which they handle well, giving priority to the most urgent at any given time. The school is not afraid to incorporate change where it is deemed to be beneficial. It still works with and shares practices with other schools, as it did when it pioneered work through the Beacon School initiative. Arrangements for the inclusion of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, permeate every aspect of the school's work and sit well with national initiatives in the 'Every Child Matters' document.
38. Subject co-ordinators take their responsibilities very seriously. They scrutinise planning and pupils' written work at regular intervals with a view to keeping the work on schedule and identifying pupils who, for any reason, are not pulling their weight. The lack of rigour in the marking of some of Year 3 pupils' work this year was identified through this process and led to effective action being taken. Training for middle managers is closely linked to the targets for improvement in the school development plan. This year, writing was highlighted and the action taken has raised standards in Years 1 and 2. Longer-term projects relate to teaching strategies, for example the move towards techniques that make pupils think and reason more independently. The school's internal review process features a good cyclic programme of self-evaluation. The headteacher and staff have very high profiles about the school. They generate a peaceful atmosphere in which pupils thrive because they are well known and encouraged to develop their individuality.
39. The governing body is effective and fulfils its statutory responsibilities well. The governors are passionate about the school and its place in the community. They work through a committee structure that allows time for rigorous discussion before recommendations are made. Governors understand the school's strengths and weaknesses and give good consideration to individual pupil's welfare and long-term

consequences before making major decisions. The budget is managed prudently with the distribution of pupils' ages and predictions of future numbers in mind. The current surplus is higher than would normally be held in reserve because it contains funds that are being used to promote ongoing initiatives linked to work with other schools. Day-to-day management of the school is effective. Financial control and planning are tight. Administrative and maintenance staff have a good feel for how the school operates and they make a significant contribution to its smooth running and efficiency.

40. Parents express confidence in the school and its leadership. Taking into account the funding, the standards of work, pupils' achievement and the very good quality of provision, the school continues to provide very good value for money.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	426,342	Balance from previous year	90,889
Total expenditure	405,158	Balance carried forward to the next	112,073
Expenditure per pupil	2,915		

Note. The current surplus is considerably less than is shown for 2003/04. This figure includes a substantial reserve of approximately £40,000 for utility bills that had not been agreed when the accounts were closed for that year.

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 **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children benefit from rich conversation and they gain very good skills for reading and writing.
- The shared teaching sessions with pupils in Year 1 extend the ideas children use in their imaginative play.
- Children enjoy their work and play with resources and tools that encourage inventiveness and skill.

Commentary

41. Children join the school at the age of four with a variety of experiences from nurseries and pre-school groups. Their attainment on entry is close to that of most children of similar age. They achieve very well in all the areas of learning that were seen during the inspection because they make substantial progress from the start. Most are on course to exceed the goals set out for them in the Foundation Stage. The school provides a rich variety of activities, all of which are organised to ensure that each child learns really well, whether alongside pupils in Year 1 or as a group of reception-aged children. The different teaching groups organised through the week quicken children's learning and deepen their understanding of what the school and the world have to offer. New ideas and skills are taught very well and in fun ways. Each child has the opportunity to rehearse unfamiliar ideas independently through their play and there is no stress. Teaching and learning in all areas of learning are very good, and there has been good improvement in the overall provision and children's progress since the previous inspection. The accommodation is satisfactory. Resources are good. Leadership and management are particularly good.
42. The children's **personal, social and emotional development** is very good. They play alongside and with each other very well and for a good length of time. They are very well behaved children who can manage themselves well and make choices happily. They treat each other with respect and enjoy the freedom to figure things out and examine objects for themselves. Children mature very well and develop plenty of personal skills to help them become independent and negotiate with others. A good proportion of the children can persevere to make, build or ponder a little problem before they go to an adult.
43. Achievement in **communication, language and literacy** is very good. Adults lead conversation with great energy and enthusiasm, and children revel in the stories they share and in the rhymes and letter games they play. They speak confidently and most have a similar command of language to most children of their age. They are encouraged to describe what they want in detail and they are given prime time to do so. This quickly enhances communication skills. Children get a flying start to their reading and have plenty of personal support as they learn to use the skills they are taught, which they do quite single-mindedly. A high proportion of the children can write several sentences when they transfer to Year 1, with a good deal of accuracy in

simple punctuation. They thoroughly enjoy writing messages and labels as they play in the garden centre and note down customers' orders in the cafe.

44. Achievement in **mathematical development** is very good. Very well-planned tasks challenge children to develop ways to calculate in their heads. In one session, the children learned to combine two numbers by holding the greater one "in my head" and counting on. They tackled number sums such as $9 + 7 = 16$ with great success and dealt with misconceptions happily. Children try to describe how they add two numbers together and lively teaching prompts children to think a little more than they might otherwise do. Cheery and bouncy sing-songs, such as "We can calculate in our head", add an exciting pace. As a result, children romp through the stepping-stones to exceed the early learning goal in mathematical development.
45. Achievement in **knowledge and understanding of the world** is very good. Children's awareness of the past, of places, of scientific ideas and of beliefs is very successfully promoted by planning that links up key ideas. This is so productive that the children expect to figure things out because they observe older children testing out interesting ideas, such as the waterproof material for 'Teddy's Jacket'. They are enthralled by the scents and feel of plants as they explore for themselves and with others in the 'Garden Centre'. Here the free-flow of conversation triggers note-making, labelling and the use of hand-lenses as children muse on their findings.
46. In **physical development**, children are likely to exceed the goals expected in the skills for handling small tools and tiny resources. They were not observed at play on larger equipment so no judgement can be made about the full range of skills. However, planning indicates that a good range of activities is provided to develop stamina, skill and strength. There has been good improvement in the opportunities for children to learn through play outdoors, but this area is not fully completed and the school rightfully plans to develop it more. In **creative development**, children's inventive play is imaginative and purposeful. This is because they have a good variety of resources and tools with plenty of time for play. Teaching provides a stream of ideas to open up children's vision so that they build from the familiar to the new. Adults model new ideas productively, steering children into adventurous role-play, so much so that children with the capacity to achieve more do so. Most can play a customer or a shopkeeper role with ease; one or two of them slip into the role of an exasperated cook or perplexed waiter in the café, to great effect.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above those expected in Years 2 and 6 in all aspects of literacy.
- Very good teaching makes a significant contribution to the standards attained and the very good achievement.
- Assessment is used very well to further pupils' achievement and provide challenging targets.
- Very good leadership and management contribute significantly towards high quality provision in the subject.

Commentary

47. Achievement is very good throughout the school. Overall standards are currently above those expected for pupils' age in Year 2 and Year 6. The school has maintained high standards in national tests in Year 6 over the last few years. Results have been more variable in Year 2, although still above average in reading and average in writing in 2004. The achievement of gifted and talented pupils and those with special educational needs is very good.
48. By the time pupils reach the age of seven, overall standards in speaking and listening, reading and writing are above those expected for their age. Pupils use a range of strategies when reading, which ensures fluency. The very effective way in which their phonic skills are developed, enabling them to identify and use accurately the sounds that make up words, contributes considerably to pupils' progress in reading and writing. Most pupils make good progress in writing though fewer pupils than expected exceeded the national curriculum level expected for their age in the 2004 tests. However, writing was targeted as a priority in the school development plan for 2004/05 and evidence from the inspection shows that the action taken has been effective in raising standards further.
49. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are given good opportunities and encouragement to extend their speaking and listening skills. In a Year 5 lesson for instance, pupils engaged in a lively and enjoyable debate on fox hunting viewed from the stance of animals or of interested parties such as farmers and animal rights supporters. Thorough earlier research enabled pupils to justify their arguments with facts and figures. Pupils read accurately and fluently with good expression, and derive great enjoyment from their reading. They talk confidently about their preferences in terms of authors and types of books. Writing skills are developed very effectively. By Year 6, most pupils have acquired a good handwriting style; their spelling is generally accurate and punctuation is used appropriately. A significant proportion of pupils work at levels that are above those expected for their age. Their writing makes increasing use of adventurous vocabulary and is lively and imaginative. Pupils benefit from a range of opportunities to write at length and for different purposes. They have well-developed skills in adapting their writing to suit different requirements and audiences.
50. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to other pupils because they receive good support from teachers and teaching assistants. The work is suitably planned in small steps with clear targets so that pupils gain confidence from regular measures of success.
51. The quality of teaching and learning is very good overall. There is an emphasis on helping pupils to develop their literacy skills through purposeful activities. As a result, pupils' attitudes to the subject are very good and they enjoy the challenges presented to them. Most lessons are delivered at a good pace, with very skilled questioning that seeks to push pupils' thinking forward. The consistent quality of the teaching underpins the success of the provision. Teachers are enthusiastic, have very good subject knowledge and communicate their ideas very well. They make effective use of interactive whiteboards and ICT to reinforce the key points of lessons. Pupils' work is carefully marked and they are given a clear idea of its strengths and weaknesses and what they need to do to improve further. The setting of individual targets pinpoints for pupils where they can make improvements in their work. Information from assessment

procedures is used effectively to improve pupils' performance, guide planning and to provide challenging activities for different groups of pupils within each class.

52. Leadership and management are very good. They have been instrumental in the development of an exciting curriculum that is fully relevant to all pupils' needs. As a result of careful monitoring and evaluation of pupils' attainment, highly effective whole-school approaches have been implemented to improve pupils' writing. Improvement since the previous inspection is good.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

The development of literacy skills is planned for satisfactorily in all subjects. Opportunities for discussion and writing in subjects such as art and design and the humanities challenge pupils to express, justify and modify their opinions in real contexts. Reading, comprehension and response to the written word are at the core of pupils' learning in all aspects of the school's work.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Overall, pupils achieve very well throughout the school because they respond well to the stimulating and challenging teaching.
- Planning is linked closely to pupils' abilities and maturity. Pupils' progress in Years 1 and 2 is not held back by the mixed-age classes in mathematics.
- Assessment procedures are systematic and analytical. They enable teachers to respond quickly to pupils' needs at any time of the year.
- The use of ICT is carefully programmed to be an integral part of many lessons in mathematics.
- Very good leadership and management contribute to pupils' enjoyment and interest in mathematics.

Commentary

53. Pupils' results in national tests taken in Year 2 in 2004 were well above the national average. The proportion of pupils exceeding the level expected for their age was above that found nationally. Pupils' performance rose significantly in 2004, from below average compared with other schools in previous years. The improvement is being sustained because pupils respond very well to the well-planned and challenging teaching. Currently, pupils achieve very well in Years 1 and 2. Overall, standards are well above those expected for pupils' age in Year 2.
54. Pupils' performance in national tests taken in Year 6 in 2004 was average compared with all schools. Results were not as good as in previous years, when they were consistently well above average, because there was a significant change in the make up of the year group during 2003/04. Those pupils who joined the school at this late stage made good progress from their starting point but their attainment was below average. Other pupils achieved very well and performed similarly to previous year groups. Currently, overall standards of work in Year 6 are above those expected at the age of eleven. This represents exceptionally good achievement compared with their prior attainment in Year 2, which was very low.
55. Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well throughout the school. They meet the targets set for them by the time they leave the school because lessons are well planned to make the best use of support from teaching assistants. This gives pupils confidence and encourages them to make a contribution to whole-class activities without fear of making a mistake.
56. Pupils handle numbers well. They successfully learn to choose which of the four basic operations of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division is best suited to the task because teachers encourage them to try different methods and to explain how they arrive at an answer. Evidence of this was seen in pupils' response to teachers' comments on written work about how it could be improved further. The school's approach to investigative work through problem-solving is highly effective. A very good example was the skilful and stimulating way in which pupils in Year 5 were assisted to develop a systematic approach to the selection and analysis of information to solve complex problems. Other aspects of mathematics, such as shape and measure, are

covered equally well. Very good use is made of ICT to focus attention in class discussion, to provide visual images that aid pupils' understanding of graphical and diagrammatic work and, not least, to enable pupils to work independently at their own speed.

57. The overall quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is very good. Teachers have a very good understanding of the subject material and planning is such that the work is well suited to pupils of different abilities within the class. Planning for the mixed-age classes in Years 1 and 2 is particularly good because expectations are high and the tasks set for different groups are challenging. A noticeable feature of good practice in lessons throughout the school is the way teachers avoid lengthy repetitious exercises when it is clear that pupils' understanding is secure. Teachers focus clearly on developing skills that enable pupils to gain confidence in applying and transferring mathematical techniques to unknown situations. By the time pupils reach Years 5 and 6, they demonstrate a good degree of independence. Their written work is neatly presented, meeting the school's expectations. Marking is thorough, supportive and constructive. It indicates how the work could be improved further, with comments at a later date on the pupil's response. The exception is in Year 3, where discontinuity in teaching this year has led to unevenness in pupils' learning. Progress here is satisfactory but not as good as in other year groups.
58. The subject is very well led and managed. Strategies for managing pupils' learning in mathematics are flexible and effective, which is particularly relevant bearing in mind the number of mixed-age classes. Assessment procedures are very good. They are organised in such a way as to enable teachers to respond quickly, at any time of the year, to changes in pupils' progress towards predicted targets. This contributes significantly to the consistency of pupils' achievement in mathematics. Improvement since the previous inspection is good.

Mathematics across the curriculum

Pupils' numerical skills are used well across the curriculum, especially in conjunction with subjects such as science, geography and ICT. The development and consolidation of pupils' mathematical skills are integral to the planning in other subjects, such as in ICT when pupils used statistical data from geography to draw up and interpret graphs on climate change in different parts of the world. Similarly, in mathematics, problems gain in impact through relevance to other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 6 used data about the solar system to investigate range, median and mode and displayed the findings in diagrammatic form on the computer.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have very good levels of knowledge and understanding and they know how to investigate.
- Higher achievers and those talented in their understanding of science are stretched as much as others.
- Pupils are encouraged to describe or explain the patterns and relationships in their scientific findings and they do this very well.

Commentary

59. A small but significant influx of pupils into Year 6 prior to the national tests in 2004 resulted in a dip from the usual pattern of high performance to an average level when compared with all schools. The pattern of results over several years shows clearly that most pupils throughout the school reach high standards. This is an accurate reflection of pupils' very good achievement in their knowledge and understanding of science. On occasions, the momentum of learning has slowed a little in the lower juniors because of unavoidable changes in staff, but progress accelerates in Years 5 and 6, where pupils develop their investigative and recording skills very well. Overall, the standard of work in Years 2 and 6 is well above that expected for pupils' age.
60. The quality of teaching and learning is very good throughout the school. In the lessons observed in the infant classes, pupils enthusiastically described their investigations and spent plenty of time thinking about their findings. They learnt a lot from each other and their work was carefully matched to their needs in learning. Very good teaching pushes at the boundaries of scientific ideas just as pupils are ready to move on to the next stage in their learning. This factor makes a significant difference to the depth of pupils' understanding. Plenty of practical hands-on work helps pupils to think for themselves, predict, observe, measure and graph their findings. In doing so, they link together important ideas and come to realise that they sometimes have to modify their original notion. As one pupil noted after checking the results of an investigation: "the shed wasn't the coldest place.... It was the front door".
61. Science is taught in separate year groups and very effectively so. Junior-age pupils build robustly on the skills gained in earlier years. By Years 3 and 4, pupils know what makes a fair test and they learn to analyse their findings well. Older juniors interpret their findings in conversation in lessons and are expected to record them succinctly and accurately. They rehearse the writing up of difficult scientific statements, so much so that many of them can generalise from their own findings. " We know that the shinier an object, the more likely it will reflect the light or object in front of it" - a very well-composed statement, typical of an average-attaining child in Year 6. Consistent teaching methods, brief tests of pupils' understanding and very good management, all ensure that pupils keep pace and achieve very well. Pupils use ICT to analyse and manipulate their findings quickly and fruitfully. There is very good leadership and improvement in science. Perceptive management measures the impact of developments on what and how pupils learn. Swift action deals with any dip in pupils' progress, and leadership shows a passion for the subject that inspires the pupils.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are encouraged to use ICT to underpin their studies in all subjects.
- Leadership and management of the subject is very good. They provide structure and strategies for the progressive development of ICT as a tool for teaching and for pupils' learning.
- Teachers' expertise and confidence with ICT make a significant contribution to the quality of provision and pupils' enthusiasm for the subject.

Commentary

62. Pupils achieve very well throughout the school. Standards are above average for pupils' age in Years 2 and 6 because they are curious and enthusiastic about their work. They are keen to explore and present information using ICT skills and confidently use them as an integral part of their work in other subjects. Pupils are trusted to handle the equipment with care and respect, for example when collecting and returning lap-top computers for recharging. The resources for ICT have improved considerably since the previous inspection. A mini-suite of computers in the library area and the mobile trolley of lap-top computers ensure that facilities are readily available to all classes as and when needed. Consequently, pupils have sufficient opportunities to work independently. They build up their technical skills progressively.
63. In Years 1 and 2, the main focus is on basic skills and word-processing. There is a good cross-curricular focus in specific ICT lessons, particularly with regard to the consolidation and practice of literacy and numerical skills. For example, in Year 1, pupils used the computer to draw flowers, label some of the parts and print off their work. Without prompting, a few pupils went as far as to add soil and a root system. They could explain the function of the roots and their importance to the plant's survival, thereby transferring learning between subjects. Discussion with pupils in Year 6 revealed a good understanding of the potential of technology and the ability to select the right systems for a particular purpose. Pupils are not afraid to experiment with programs and, even at a young age, they can explain how to manipulate their way through information on the computer screen. By the time they leave the school, most pupils have a sound grounding in the use of ICT to find, analyse and present information and control things. The improvement of written work, through the use of ICT for editing and redrafting, is contributing to the improvement of pupils' writing and creative skills.
64. Pupils with special educational needs of all kinds achieve very well. They benefit from good individual support and teaching that provides the right level of challenge for them to gain satisfaction from what they do. These pupils often find communication through technology easier than through handwritten work.
65. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. It was only possible to observe one lesson during the inspection but discussion with pupils and scrutiny of their work in ICT and other subjects revealed a good understanding of basic technical skills and how to apply them. Most importantly, pupils realise that the computer is only as good as the user's ability to make it perform the operations required. The teachers' expertise in encouraging pupils' self-confidence in this respect is a significant factor in pupils' learning. Teachers are well trained in ICT skills. Good tactics in all subjects include the use of interactive white boards to involve pupils in the progressive development of work central to the aims of the lesson. Pupils' work is assessed on a regular basis and the information used to inform planning for future lessons. The strategy works well because teachers can support those who need more help whilst providing greater challenge for those who work at a faster rate.
66. The subject is very well led and managed. The school is very close to achieving the quality E-mark for its sound, innovative approach to the teaching and use of ICT. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection when some aspects of the national curriculum in ICT were not covered.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

Teachers' planning in all subjects regularly incorporates the development and application of ICT skills. Pupils know when and how to make use of ICT to enhance their work through research, analysis and display of numerical data, and the formatting of written work. Older pupils recognise the versatility of ICT as a tool for communication. It is integral to pupils' work, not an 'add on'.

HUMANITIES

67. Religious education was inspected in a separate inspection organised and reported on by the diocese.
68. Pupils' work in history and geography was sampled because not enough evidence was available to make overall judgements on provision, standards and teaching. History was not on the timetable during the inspection and it was only possible to see two lessons in geography. Evidence about history was gathered through discussion and looking at pupils' work. Year 6 pupils recollected some of their earlier studies on the Vikings and Ancient Egyptians. They had clearly enjoyed the recent work on the Second World War and talked knowledgeably and with feeling about world leaders at that time. Pupils showed considerable empathy with evacuees, largely through studying the text, 'Goodnight Mr Tom' - further evidence of teachers making very good cross-curricular links.
69. Good teaching in the two geography lessons observed led to pupils achieving well and reaching the standards seen in most schools. Written work in Years 3 to 6 indicates that pupils are provided with satisfactory opportunities to extend their knowledge and understanding of the local area and the use of maps. The acquisition of specific vocabulary connected with the seaside showed good links with the development of pupils' literacy skills in Years 1 and 2; ICT skills had been used well to produce block graphs on favourite seaside destinations. To complete a well-rounded view of this area of study, pupils had looked at the seaside in earlier times and successfully compared it with the present day. Further evidence of pupils' independent work was seen in Year 5 pupils' research into a country of their choice. The finished work, most of it word-processed and attractively presented, illustrated pupils' very good attitudes and their determination to see a project through to its conclusion.
70. An action plan for the development of geography within the context of cross-curricular provision is being prepared for inclusion in next year's school development plan. This will broaden pupils' awareness of cultures, peoples and customs in Europe and elsewhere in the world and allow for a more integrated approach to the teaching of non-core subjects within the curriculum.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

71. Pupils' work in these subjects was sampled because it was not possible to see enough practical work to make judgements about standards and overall provision. Evidence from the inspection indicates that the focus in art and design and design and technology is on raising teachers' confidence in the teaching of design skills and providing pupils with a range of experiences through which they can express themselves creatively. Music and physical activity have a high profile. They make a strong contribution to pupils' wider education and ability to make the best use of their leisure time out of school, both now and in the future.

Art and design

72. There has been a concerted approach to improve the strategies and techniques for teaching artistic skills. Teachers have benefited from working alongside practising artists who have taught pupils specific skills prior to helping them produce large-scale works of art. Pupils have gained enormously from these projects by seeing what they can achieve individually and collectively. The Lowry style wall display in Class 4 is particularly impressive because it captures the mood and stance of people in Lowry's pictures. The sculptured mosaics that decorate the outside of the school building are similarly good examples of pupils' talents drawn out by professional artists.
73. Currently, teachers in all classes are focusing on teaching the basic design, observational and painting skills. Pupils record their work in sketchbooks and evaluate it by noting down how they think it could be improved. They are encouraged to consider their sketchbooks as personal property, which is a good practice because pupils can take their books home and add to the work if they want to, which many do. The short-term strategy for developing progressively the underlying skills is working well. Pupils' enthusiasm for art gains in momentum as their confidence increases, for example when teachers encouraged them to assess and build on the best features of pencil sketches, self-portraits and clay models of gargoyles.
74. The subject is used well in cross-curricular work for younger pupils, such as the Garden Centre and China themes in Years 1 and 2. In both, factual knowledge and creative development are combined with the development of literacy skills to emphasise the wholeness of the learning experience. Plans are in hand to extend this approach to the work of older pupils.

Design and technology

75. This subject is not as well developed as art and design because teachers do not have confidence in teaching the full range of skills, in particular, those associated with mechanical and electrical control of the movement of objects. In other aspects, such as food technology and the construction of objects using joints, pupils satisfactorily practise the processes involved in the designing, making and evaluation of the finished product. They keep written records of the reasoning behind their work, showing an understanding of some of the principles underlying the manufacturing process. As with art and design, the school is focusing on developing pupils' basic skills in the subject but it acknowledges teachers' lack of expertise and confidence in teaching some aspects of the curriculum.

Music

76. Leadership of the subject demonstrates very good knowledge and understanding of how pupils learn music best. Pupils in Year 6 achieve very well. They compose jingles using musical features such as melody, musical elements and teamwork as markers against which they assess the quality of the piece they compose together in small groups. In doing so, they demonstrate very good use of musical terminology and qualities of rehearsal that are generous and encouraging to each other. Junior-age pupils enjoy rehearsing and performing at the local music festival and video evidence shows that they performed very well indeed. Singing for worship is harmonious and pleasant. The lesson observed in Class 1 used an outstanding arrangement of music based on the story of 'We're all going on a Bear Hunt'. Pupils sang with great enthusiasm, using instruments to punctuate the events in the story. They understood a

huge amount of musical vocabulary as well as having great fun in their performance. Achievement was as good as it gets! The resources for the subject are good and represent instruments from around the world well. Children get off to a particularly fine start in their musical education.

Physical education

77. It was only possible to observe one lesson in physical education. Pupils in the mixed-age class in Years 1 and 2 demonstrated good skills in controlling a ball and awareness of healthy exercise. They achieve well in their skills of balance, stamina and hand-eye co-ordination in their infant years.
78. The school makes very good use of specialist coaches and seeks out additional ways of developing a wider range of skills than pupils might otherwise have. Physical activity is an important part in most school days for all the pupils. There are plenty of exciting aerobic sessions to refresh the body and mind, which teachers and parents also attend, and lots of activity through games and sports such as football, athletics and cricket. Many of these are arranged through the growing links with the local sports college. Older pupils have regular opportunities to become competent swimmers before they transfer to secondary education and most can swim at least 25 metres. Sports after school provide many opportunities for boys and girls to develop team skills, pursue a specialist skill or engage in a leisure activity. A recent development, seen in action during the inspection, was a very good judo class for infants. Pupils were intent on gaining the proper skills and knew the purpose of them. Many developments in the subject have been brought about by very determined and successful leadership of the subject that inspires the school team of teachers and support staff. They share a common enthusiasm for making physical education and healthy life-style messages an integral part of each day.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

79. The programme for PSHE is very well designed to: develop a safe and healthy life-style; develop pupils' confidence and maturity; prepare pupils to play an active role as citizens. Opportunities to learn about and engage in democratic opportunities are plentiful and rewarding. Sex education and awareness of the effect of the misuse of drugs are dealt with sensitively and with parents' knowledge. Time is allocated in every class for pupils to discuss topics or concerns in a mutually supportive way. Assemblies incorporate an extensive range of opportunities for pupils to learn about relationships within society.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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