

INSPECTION REPORT

St Theresa's RC School

Finchley/London

LEA area: Barnet

Unique reference number: 101335

Headteacher: Michael Lyons

Lead inspector: Hazel Callaghan

Dates of inspection: 18th to 21st April 2005

Inspection number: 267955

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

© Crown copyright 2005

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

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: 202

School address: East End Road
Finchley
London

Postcode: N3 2TD

Telephone number: 020 83468826

Fax number: 020 83460215

Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of chair of governors: Michael Driver

Date of previous inspection: 01 February 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St Theresa's is a Voluntary Aided Roman Catholic primary school. With 202 girls and boys on roll it is an average sized primary school. It admits pupils from across the local Roman Catholic parish. Most pupils are from committed Catholic families, but recently some non-Catholic children have been admitted when there are places available. This has resulted in a slight shift in the socio-economic mix of the pupils' backgrounds. At the previous inspection children were judged as above average standards on entry to the school. This has continued to be the case, but this year children in the reception class are of broadly average attainment. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average. Many children come from families that have other home languages than English, although their knowledge of English is strong and this does not affect their learning. There were three pupils in the school who were in the early stages of learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs is broadly average. Most of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties. There is a very small proportion of pupils having a statement of special educational needs. The school has a successful partnership with Christ College which provides support for the provision of gifted and talented pupils and for information and communication technology. There are also links with Finchley Catholic High School developing business projects and training.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
22254	Hazel Callaghan	Lead inspector	Mathematics Science Information and communication technology Design and technology Physical education
9172	Sarah McDermott	Lay inspector	
31334	Barbara Atcheson	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Geography History Art and design
20003	Susan Metcalfe	Team inspector	English Special educational needs English as an additional language Music Personal, social and health education and citizenship

The inspection contractor was:

Altecq Inspections Limited
102 Bath Road
Cheltenham
GL53 7JX

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be made initially to the contractor. The procedures are set out in the leaflet '*Complaining about Ofsted Inspections*', which is available from Ofsted Publications Centre (telephone 07002 637833) or Ofsted's website (www.ofsted.gov.uk).

REPORT CONTENTS

Page

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

6

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

8

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

10

Teaching and learning

The curriculum

Care, guidance and support

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

15

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

18

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

28

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

St Theresa's is an **effective school** that has maintained a strong focus on attaining high standards. Relationships are excellent, teaching is good and pupils achieve well. The headteacher provides clear leadership in the development of the strong Christian ethos of the school. He is well supported by the deputy headteacher and staff. The school is led and managed satisfactorily overall. Its budget is well managed and the school achieves **good value for money**.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- There is a strong Christian ethos in which relationships are excellent and pupils' spiritual and moral development is promoted very well.
- Standards are well above average in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6.
- Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are not high enough.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good.
- There is insufficient clarity in the school's strategic planning.
- Although the curriculum is satisfactorily, opportunities to enrich and extend pupils' learning are not sufficiently provided.
- The school's partnership with parents is not sufficiently developed in some areas.

The school has made satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection. The strong Christian ethos of the school has been effectively maintained and standards in mathematics and science at the end of Year 6 have risen. The concerns expressed at the previous inspection have mostly been addressed except in strategic planning which remains unsatisfactory. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage has improved. The provision for ICT is now satisfactory overall but insufficient time is given and achievement is unsatisfactory.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Pupils **achieve well** through the school. In some classes achievement is very good. Standards have been well above average at the end of Year 6 for the last three years in English and mathematics, and in science well above average for the last two years. From the evidence gathered during the inspection these standards have been effectively maintained and pupils are well on their way to attaining these standards again this year due to their good achievement.

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	A
Mathematics	A	A	A	A
Science	B	A	A	B

Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average

Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2

Standards at Year 2 have fluctuated over the last few years. Standards in reading and writing are above average, but standards in mathematics and science are broadly average this year. There are fewer pupils attaining the higher standard of Level 3 in mathematics and science than has been the case over the last two years. Changes in staff have caused some difficulties but good achievement is evident in Year 1 and through Years 3 to 6. Children in

the Foundation Stage have also made good progress especially in their mathematical development, personal, emotional and social development and in their physical development to attain above average standards. Currently there is an average spread of ability in the Foundation Stage whereas in previous years attainment into the school has been above average and standards when pupils entered Year 1 in the past have been consistently above those expected in all areas of learning. This year children are attaining the standards expected in their communication, language and literacy, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development. Standards in information and communication technology, although average at Years 2 and 6, are not high enough as pupils in Year 6 are capable of much higher standards in line with those attained in English, mathematics and science. The lower standards and achievement are due to insufficient time being given to the subject. It was not possible to judge standards in other subjects given the time available.

Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **very good**, overall. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour and personal development are very good. Relationships through the school are excellent and reflect pupils' very good social and moral development. Pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. Attendance is usually above average but has dipped slightly this year and is currently below the national average because of prolonged illness of a few pupils.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is **good**. Teaching and learning are **good** overall. In some classes teaching is very good. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' good behaviour and attention so they respond very well and make good progress in lessons. Activities are well matched to pupils' needs and build effectively on their prior learning. Teaching assistants are deployed well and are an important part of the good teaching. Assessment procedures are satisfactory overall and good in English and mathematics. The curriculum is satisfactory. There has been insufficient guidance on how to improve the curriculum further and there are few activities that further enrich pupils' learning. Children make a good start to their learning in the reception class. Pastoral care of pupils is very good, welfare is good overall but procedures for ensuring child protection need strengthening. Pupils of all abilities and needs are effectively supported and guided. The provision for pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language is good. There are satisfactory links with the community and good links with other local schools.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **satisfactory** overall. The headteacher has maintained the long standing of high standards and he promotes the Catholic ethos of the school well. The deputy headteacher is effective in her leadership. She leads the provision for pupils with special educational needs and development of assessment procedures well. Governance is **satisfactory**. The role of the governing body has improved. Governors are very supportive of the school and have a satisfactory awareness of its strengths and weaknesses. The school satisfactorily identifies areas for further development but the school improvement plan is not sufficiently effective to support strategic planning. The work of the school is satisfactorily monitored but the role of co-ordinators is not sufficiently developed to ensure pupils' skills are developed systematically in all subjects.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Most parents are very supportive of the school but there are some weaknesses in communications and this sometimes results in misunderstandings. Some information in pupil reports is missing. Pupils enjoy school. The new school council is a positive step to further developing pupils' initiative.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- raise standards in ICT;
- improve the school improvement plan so that it supports strategic planning and enables improvements to be effectively monitored and evaluated;
- further develop opportunities for pupils' learning by enriching the curriculum and providing a more creative balance of activities;
- further develop communication with parents so a more effective partnership is created;

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- ensure that reports to parents meet requirements;
- improve the procedures for ensuring child protection so they meet requirements.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement is **good** overall and standards generally **above average** by the end of Year 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make a good start to their education in the Foundation Stage and achieve well.
- Pupils achieve well and standards are above average in English, mathematics and science by end of Year 6.
- Pupils of all abilities achieve well through the school.
- Standards in ICT are not high enough.

Commentary

1. Children entering the Foundation Stage have a very wide range of attainment. This year attainment on entry is broadly in line with the national average. However, in previous years attainment has been above average. On entry to Year 1 standards have also been above average with a good proportion of children working within the National Curriculum Level 1. This year, children are well on their way to attain the nationally expected standards known as the early learning goals in all areas of learning and exceed them in their personal, social and emotional development and their mathematical and physical development. This represents good achievement particularly in these areas of learning and children are well prepared for their future learning.
2. In Year 2 standards are above the national average in reading and writing and achievement is good. These standards are similar to those attained at the 2004 National Curriculum tests and similar to those found at the previous inspection. Although above average when compared with all schools nationally, standards are similar to those of other schools with a similar socio-economic background (as judged by the eligibility of pupils to free school meals). Standards in mathematics and science are broadly average and achievement is satisfactory overall. Most pupils are working within the standards expected for their age in mathematics and science but few are attaining the higher than average standard of Level 3. This is similar to the standards judged at the previous inspection. Standards in mathematics are not as high as they have been in the last three years. In the 2004 National Curriculum tests standards were in the top 5 per cent of schools nationally and well above those of similar schools. These high standards represented pupils' very good achievement. Currently, pupils achieve satisfactorily in Years 1 and 2. Achievement is good in Year 1 but has fluctuated in Year 2 due to changing staff and this is reducing standards in mathematics and science overall.

Key Stage 1

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.8 (16.0)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	15.5 (15.6)	14.6 (14.6)

mathematics	18.8 (17.1)	16.2 (16.3)
-------------	-------------	-------------

There were 25 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

- Pupils achieve well in English, mathematics and science through Years 3 to 6 to attain standards that are well above average by the end of Year 6. Standards have been effectively maintained at well above average for the last four years and are an improvement on those seen at the last inspection. In the 2004 National Curriculum tests standards were well above average in English, mathematics and science. This was the result of pupils' very good achievement since they were in Year 2. The good achievement of higher attaining pupils has been successfully maintained as there is an above average proportion of pupils attaining Level 5 than is found nationally. These consistent good standards have been produced through a clear identification of any weaknesses in pupils' learning and good, often very good, teaching.

Key Stage 2

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	29.7 (31.1)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	29.9 (29.3)	27.0 (26.8)
science	30.8 (31.1)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 27 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

- Good achievement can also be identified in the work of pupils with special educational needs and those who are in the early stages of learning English as an additional language. The careful planning by class teachers and supporting staff and effective provision of work that matches pupils' learning needs has enabled pupils to make good progress. Last year several pupils on the special educational needs register attained Level 4 in English which was a remarkable achievement for them.
- Standards in ICT are broadly average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, but this represents unsatisfactory achievement by Year 6 given pupils' capabilities and the standards attained in English, mathematics and science. In the lessons observed, pupils work quickly and efficiently at their tasks, grasping the principles of the activities and gaining understanding well. Lessons, however, are either too short or too infrequent for learning to be any better than satisfactory and so standards are not increasing the way they should.
- The other subjects were not a focus of the inspection or there were too few opportunities for pupils' learning to be observed for secure judgements to be made on either standards or achievement. Standards in design and technology have, however, improved since the previous inspection as there is now a satisfactory curriculum in place and the skills are taught on a planned and regular basis.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

The attendance and punctuality of the pupils are **satisfactory**. The attitudes and behaviour of the pupils are **very good**. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is also **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils really enjoy school and get on extremely well with each other and with their teachers.
- The behaviour of many pupils is exemplary and all pupils know how to behave appropriately both in class and when moving around the school.
- The strong Catholic ethos results in very thoughtful and reflective pupils.

Commentary

7. The attendance of the pupils is in line with most primary schools. The rate has fallen since the last inspection because the long term illness of two pupils has had a significant impact on attendance figures. Most pupils arrive on time for the start of the school day, but there are a few parents who bring their children to school late. The school follows up unexplained absences effectively. However the monitoring of lateness is not sufficiently accurate to ensure that the school can work successfully to improve punctuality.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	4.7	School data:	0.6
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.

8. Pupils are very positive about their time at school. They particularly enjoy sports and play activities outside. They speak warmly of their teachers and look forward to their lessons. Pupils are polite and courteous with staff and visitors alike. A significant number of pupils really appreciate the support and companionship of their friends. Pupils are not worried about bullying or racial harassment at school, but know who they would turn to should they have concerns. In lessons pupils collaborate very well. 'Talking partners' allow pupils to bounce ideas off each other and get the most out of their learning. Pupils are quick to help each other if a fellow is sad or hurt. The 'buddy' system is especially successful because the Year 6 pupils take their responsibilities very seriously and love taking care of their charges in Reception class. The excellent relationships and very good systems for promoting social development result in happy children who achieve well.
9. The pupils behave very well, as positively endorsed by the parents. There have been no exclusions. The promotion of moral development is very much at the heart of the school and tied up closely with the all-pervading spiritual ethos. All staff have high expectations of appropriate behaviour. Pupils have plenty of chances to discuss what is right and wrong, although they do tend to concentrate more on personal choices at the expense of wider moral issues. The very good behaviour of the pupils means no lessons are disrupted and learning proceeds well.
10. The school is particularly expert at promoting spirituality and deeper thought. The Catholic set of values, principles and beliefs is a bedrock of the school. Religious education and assemblies are considered very important times of the school day. Pupils of all ages appreciate the opportunity to come and worship together. They are quiet and thoughtful in prayers and listen extremely well to the readings. Many teachers instil a joy in learning and self-awareness, although there is still work to be done in extending the curriculum to provide more stimulating and interesting experiences.
11. The promotion of cultural development is satisfactory. This was a key issue at the last inspection. The school has improved links by extending the understanding of the Catholic faith in other countries and making greater mention of the festivals of other faiths. The European cultural link through the 'Comenius' project is well under way. Pupils undertake very successful fund raising for the less well off in other countries. However, many of these links are at arm's length and do not give pupils sufficient first hand experience of how other people live. The school is not sufficiently tapping into the wealth and vibrancy of the many cultural groups in the London area to extend the cultural understanding of its pupils.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is **good**. The curriculum is **satisfactory**. Welfare, support and guidance are **good**. Links with parents and the community are **satisfactory**. Links with other schools are **good**.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning are **good**, and often very good, through the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' work is well matched to their learning needs and builds successfully on what they already know and can do.
- There are very high expectations for pupils' good behaviour and attention.
- Support staff are used effectively to support pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language.
- Procedures for assessing pupils' work and progress are good in English and mathematics.
- Information on pupils' skills development in the foundation subjects is not as yet sufficiently recorded.

Commentary

12. The quality of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage is good with some very good teaching and as a result children achieve well, especially in their personal, social and emotional development and their mathematical development. The teacher's command of the Foundation Stage curriculum is very secure. She is very enthusiastic and has high expectations of the children. Good deployment of well-trained teaching assistants extends and supports learning in an effective way.
13. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. In some classes it is very good because pupils' work is well matched to their learning needs and builds successfully on what they already know and can do. There are very high expectations for pupils' good behaviour and attention to which pupils respond well. Relationships through the school are very good, pupils want to do well and consequently they concentrate and try hard. They cooperate with each other very well, developing very good collaborative skills by the end of Year 6. In the most effective lessons, very high quality questioning skills ensure that all pupils fully understand core ideas. Many teachers use the interactive whiteboards well to introduce new ideas and to support pupils' understanding. They explain new ideas clearly and structure their lessons well so pupils' knowledge and skills are steadily consolidated and extended. Higher attaining pupils are well challenged in English, mathematics and science. In mathematics and science, for example, tasks are given that require them to use what they already know to solve problems. In the best lessons, teaching assistants work closely with the teachers to support pupils of all abilities.
14. In the one unsatisfactory lesson seen activities were not as well matched to pupils' abilities and progress in learning was slow. The more able pupils and those of average ability were not sufficiently challenged by their tasks and quickly became bored. Teaching and learning in ICT are satisfactory, overall, and have improved since the previous inspection. Teachers' confidence and subject knowledge are satisfactory but insufficient time is given to teaching and learning and consequently pupils make slower progress than they should.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 32 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
-----------	-----------	------	--------------	----------------	------	-----------

1 (3.1%)	9 (28%)	10 (31%)	11 (34)	1 (3.1%)	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.

15. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well towards their own targets and often attain the standards expected for their age. Pupils benefit from working in ability groups in English and mathematics as this helps staff to match work more precisely to pupils' needs, ensuring that work is at a suitably challenging level. The quality of the work of the special educational needs co-ordinator, the support teacher and class assistants is good, sometimes very good. All are very well aware of the targets from pupils' individual education plans and have had training to meet pupils' specific needs. They plan with the class teachers a range of activities that support, challenge, develop skills while making learning enjoyable, especially involving pupils in their own learning. The few pupils with English as an additional language also achieve well. Pupils have the opportunity to use dual language/home language resources as necessary to support their understanding. In withdrawal groups, pupils have the opportunity for intensive, short time but high focused work and their learning is thus good.
16. The quality of procedures to assess pupils' work is satisfactory overall. In English and mathematics they are good and the information is used well by teachers to adapt their lesson planning so activities build effectively on past learning. In some classes the grouping of pupils into appropriate ability groups with tasks that are well matched to their needs results in very good achievement. Procedures for assessing pupils' standards in science are also thorough, having been recently improved to include assessments for pupils' investigational skills. Unlike English and mathematics, however, the information about pupils' standards is not collated and consequently progress and achievement are not as easily monitored. Pupils' individual targets in English and mathematics are well focused so pupils have a clear understanding of what they need to do in order to improve. This is especially well developed in Year 6 and ensures pupils have high expectations for their own achievement. In some other classes teachers do not sufficiently refer to pupils' targets in lessons to ensure pupils consider them whilst working. In other subjects, teachers satisfactorily assess pupils' work and progress against the learning objectives for the unit of work, but information on pupils' skills development is not as yet sufficiently recorded. This has been identified by the school as an aspect for future improvement. Teachers' marking is usually supportive and gives pupils a good understanding of the strengths of their work and areas for improvement.

The curriculum

The curriculum is **satisfactory** overall. Curriculum development, including innovation, is **unsatisfactory**. Accommodation and resources are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The Foundation Stage curriculum offers stimulating and interesting activities that promote good learning for children in the reception class.
- Although the basic curriculum through the school is satisfactory, it is insufficiently enhanced by additional creative experiences.
- A weakness in the resources for information and communication technology handicaps pupils' learning.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language is good.

- Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good.
- Good work has been done in developing the accommodation.

Commentary

17. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is very good. Very effective links across the curriculum support children's good understanding. These links give children a broad range of experiences and enable them to learn effectively as there is a good balance between practical, hands-on learning experiences and the direct teaching of key skills. The teacher is well qualified and experienced and has the valuable support of a well trained teaching assistant. The classroom, which has been newly refurbished, benefits from a small but well planned outdoor area, providing a rich learning environment which enhances the indoor provision. Resources, including the provision of a sheltered, covered outdoor area, are good.
18. For pupils in Years 1 to 6, the curriculum is satisfactory. Although the curriculum meets statutory requirements overall, not all teachers teach all subjects in sufficient depth. History and geography are taught in blocks of work over the school year with significant lengths of time between each unit of work. Pupils are gaining subject knowledge but subject-specific skills cannot be continuously and progressively developed. Learning is thus slower than would be expected as pupils have to spend time recalling, for instance, previously taught historical researching skills before developing them further. Pupils' progress in ICT is also adversely affected by too little time given to teaching and learning. Although the time for the curriculum overall is above the national expectation, a greater proportion is spent on discrete English and mathematics than is usual. This means that in music, for instance, there is little recording of pupils' own compositions or appreciation of the music of famous composers because of limited time, especially for the younger pupils.
19. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been well integrated into the school and early intervention programmes have been successfully implemented to enhance the curriculum provided for pupils who need greater support. This has had a very beneficial effect on the standards pupils attain. Good opportunities are provided in other subject areas for pupils to use their literacy and numeracy skills, for instance recording facts about different periods in history or writing up experiments in science and design and technology.
20. The curriculum has improved since the previous inspection and all subjects now meet statutory requirements, but the curriculum provided is basic with little provided in the way of additional activities to enrich pupils' learning. Innovations such as themed weeks for science and history do not occur. There are few art, music or other creative activities during or just after the school day. Pupils' experiences are not enhanced by working with professional artists or poets. There are a limited number of sporting extra-curricular activities, a chess club and Irish dancing, a Choir and Art club which are all organised by outside agencies. They are popular with the children but all are fee paying and have waiting lists. As a way of providing a broader curriculum, all pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 have an hour of French tuition each week. They thoroughly enjoy the opportunity but, because of the small size of the ICT suite, classes tend to alternate between the two subjects so reducing the effectiveness of both.
21. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and they achieve well. Very good use is made of the skills of outside agencies to support learning through the effective identification of pupils' needs and suggested strategies for supporting such pupils. The match of supporting staff, especially those supporting pupils with special educational needs, to the demands of the curriculum is good. The special educational needs co-ordinator is a particular asset to the school, having good relationships with teachers, adults, parents, the community and outside agencies. The few pupils who have English as an additional language are also provided for well. Each has an individual education plan to develop their skills and the opportunity to work 1:1 or in very small groups with the special educational needs co-ordinator and class assistants

regularly during each week. Their progress is carefully monitored and their targets adjusted accordingly.

22. The governors and headteacher have been working methodically and successfully to improve the school accommodation. Outside, the pupils now have stimulating places and equipment for recreation and sport. Inside, the well maintained and spacious classrooms provide a pleasant learning environment. The library is having a beneficial effect on literacy, but the computer suite is small and can only hold half a class at a time, so it is difficult to ensure equal access to ICT. The governors are aware of their duty to adapt the school for disabled access as soon as they can, but currently there is no ramp for disabled access.

Care, guidance and support

The care, welfare, health and safety of the school are **good overall**. The provision of support, advice and guidance based on monitoring is **good**. Pupils are well involved in school life.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All pupils have very good trusting relationships with school adults and feel comfortable to turn to them for support and advice.
- The school is not up to date with the recommended training for child protection.
- The school knows its pupils very well and provides high levels of pastoral support.
- Pupils have plenty of chances to take responsibility and give their views on how the school is run.

Commentary

23. The school has maintained the good levels of care and support for its pupils since the last inspection. Health and safety systems are very good and effectively overseen by the governors, headteacher and caretaker. The site is safe and secure. There are a good number of staff well trained in first aid. The school is particularly careful to ensure parents are immediately informed should their child have a worrying accident. Records of accidents are meticulously recorded, although the use of loose leaf pages to log bumps to heads is not sufficiently secure. All staff know what to do should they be suspicious of child abuse. However, it is unsatisfactory that none of the staff have received the strongly recommended refresher training in the latest child protection procedures.
24. Pupils feel very happy and secure at St Theresa's. Induction procedures are very good. They form a sound basis for strong relationships with parents. Pupils of all ages are comfortable in turning to adults in the school should they feel sad or worried. The school keeps a close eye on the pastoral needs of each pupil and establishes good links with outside agencies, such as the education welfare officer and educational psychologist, to provide the right support. Through personal, social and health education pupils are prepared well for life beyond school. Although there is no formal assessment of pupils' personal development, the close family feel of the school ensures each pupil is very well known and looked after by the staff.
25. Pupils have a good voice in the school. They can express their views through school surveys, the new pupil council and in class 'circle times'. There is a regular slot each week for councillors to collect the suggestions of other pupils and to feed back after the council meeting. The school management has taken account of the pupils' requests for more playground equipment and now the playground boasts 'ball walls' and an activity

trail. Councillors take on their responsibilities very maturely, but are not yet sufficiently involved in running the meetings themselves. Other pupils contribute very positively to the running of the school through their roles as prefects and 'buddies'. On a personal level pupils are starting to take more initiative in their learning but are not all sufficiently enabled to develop their independence when making choices about their own learning.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has a **satisfactory** partnership with parents. Links with the community are **satisfactory** and links with other schools and colleges are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are very keen to see their children achieve well and are strong supporters of school activities and fundraising events.
- The school is not sufficiently at ease in dealing with parental concerns or in seeking the views of parents.
- Links with a wide range of secondary schools are positively helping the school develop its curriculum.

Commentary

26. Parents play an important and valuable role in promoting their children's education and supporting the school. They are particularly successful in running the active Friends of St Theresa's and raising funds for school developments. Parents turn out in very good numbers for school events and productions, including the meeting to present the annual report of governors. The pupils achieve well in the knowledge that both home and school share the same high expectations of behaviour and achievement.
27. The majority of parents are pleased with the school and the way it helps their children progress. However, a significant minority has several concerns. These mostly stem from a perceived lack of communication between the school and home. The administrative information provided by the school is satisfactory and includes the normal communication found in most primary schools, such as newsletters, a list of future dates for the year and the governors' annual report. Information about the curriculum has recently improved with the introduction of termly topic overviews. However, there are not enough chances for parents to come into the school to find out more about the curriculum and how subjects are taught. Parents have sufficient opportunities to meet their children's teachers to talk about their children's progress. Nevertheless, annual reports do not give parents a clear enough message on progress made over the year in each subject of the curriculum.
28. A few parents are uncomfortable about approaching the school and feel that the school does not take sufficient account of their ideas or concerns. The headteacher and governors have made a good start in addressing this by carrying out their first survey of parents. A few recent complaints have now been properly resolved by the governors. However, the school is not being sufficiently proactive in celebrating the school's many good points and in working with the parents to share in the future vision and direction of the school for the pupils' good. The partnership with parents is not as good as it was at the time of the last inspection.
29. The school has good links for religious education and worship with the three local Catholic parishes. It has some useful contacts in the local Finchley area for sport and

sponsorship, but otherwise there are few links in the immediate neighbourhood. The school works well with the neighbouring secondary schools for staff professional development and for the extension of the curriculum, such as mathematics and ICT, for the pupils.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall quality of leadership and management is **satisfactory**. The leadership provided by the headteacher is **satisfactory**. The leadership provided by other staff is **satisfactory**. The school's management procedures are **satisfactory**. Governance of the school is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher's dedicated commitment to the Catholic faith underpins the life of the school.
- The leadership team has a strong commitment to pupils' spiritual and academic development.
- Strategic planning does not reflect the school's ambitions and goals.
- Some subject leaders are not sufficiently effective in bringing about the changes needed.
- Leaders are committed to running an equitable and inclusive school in which each individual matters.
- Good financial management helps the school to achieve its priorities.

Commentary

30. The strong Catholic leadership of the headteacher is very effective in supporting the high spiritual and academic standards achieved by the pupils. The headteacher is clear about his vision for the future of the school. The fact that it is not clearly reflected in the school's strategic plan minimises its impact on the direction for school improvement in terms of delivery of the curriculum and expectations of the children's learning. Communication of this educational philosophy to governors, staff, parents and pupils has not been sufficiently represented to ensure a shared vision for the school.
31. The headteacher and staff receive dedicated support from the deputy headteacher. She is hard working and very committed, reviewing and evaluating performance and providing feedback and support to the staff. Relationships are good and there is a supportive culture amongst staff which helps the less confident and newly qualified teachers. Through clear Equal Opportunities and Racial Equality policies the school sets high value on giving all children equality of treatment and opportunity.
32. Leadership of the provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The special educational needs co-ordinator is very 'hands-on'. She works with teachers to plan programmes of study for the pupils on the register from expert knowledge of the pupils' needs and expectations. High quality records of pupils' progress are kept and shared with relevant adults as well as with the pupils themselves. The co-ordinator monitors the work of the supporting staff very well and plans staff training as required.
33. Whilst the headteacher does consult subject leaders in the construction of the school's improvement plan, their contribution is based on implementation of resources rather than analysis of data in order to plan improvement to teaching and learning and so raise standards across the curriculum. As a result the plan does not give clear guidance for school improvement. The success criteria could be sharper in order to

relate the initiative to the improvement of standards and pupil achievement. Subject leaders provide satisfactory leadership overall. They continually aim to improve but they have not had the opportunity to learn from best practice elsewhere or received a quality of in-service training that will generate innovation within the curriculum.

34. The school has developed satisfactory management systems. There is a rolling review of subjects and co-ordinators are given time to scrutinise teachers' planning and pupils' work. Some subject leaders do not have a clear view of standards through the school. Assessment data is monitored primarily by the deputy headteacher who has developed and implemented a tracking system for pupils' progress in mathematics and English. It is used as an indication of where pupils achieve the best progress over the year.
35. Good financial management helps the school to achieve its priorities despite the fact that it has a very tight budget. The carry forward is earmarked effectively to finance the workforce reform required next year. The school has been very successful in the raising and management of funds, both public and private, to improve educational provision for staffing, learning resources and premises. Governors and staff have a commitment to improving the accommodation: there is a rolling programme of refurbishment. The headteacher is creative in accessing finances from varied sources to benefit the school. All purchases show value for money and have a positive impact. The school applies the principles of best value satisfactorily, but it does not use benchmarking sufficiently to compare school performance with what is being achieved in other schools. Given the low unit costs for each pupil and good achievement, the school provides good value for money.
36. Governors are supportive and their strengths lie in upgrading accommodation and the development of care and respect linked to the Catholic faith. Governors are led by the thinking of the headteacher when the school improvement plan is drafted. The governors are successful in carrying out most of their statutory responsibilities through a range of appropriate committees. Knowledge of the most recent requirements from Every Child Matters are not fully recognised, especially those linked to child protection. Governors are aware of standards in school but are not sufficiently challenging when comparing these standards with other schools. The role of governors has improved since the previous inspection but there is need for greater involvement by some to extend their awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Governors realise the need for further training to increase the contribution that they are able to make to the leadership of the school. The governors have successfully resolved a few recent complaints from a parent. However, they are not being sufficiently proactive in working with the headteacher in sharing in the future vision and direction of the school for the pupils' good.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	548,622
Total expenditure	516,936
Expenditure per pupil	2,449

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	2,400
Balance carried forward to the next	34,086

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **good**.

37. Children entering the Foundation Stage have a very wide range of attainment. Standards of attainment on entry are broadly in line with the national average this year. In past years they have been consistently above average. Children start school in September, with the youngest children attending part-time until January. The quality of teaching and learning is good with some very good teaching and as a result children achieve well. The teacher's command of the Foundation Stage curriculum is very secure. She is very enthusiastic and has high expectations of the children. Good deployment of well-trained teaching assistants extends and supports learning in an effective way. Well organised planning provides meaningful activities and very thorough assessment, monitoring and tracking of children's activities ensure that all children benefit from their experiences in the secure, welcoming atmosphere of the class. There is a high degree of independent learning, all children are confident and are beginning to have some understanding of their own learning. The children are well on their way to attaining the nationally expected early learning goals in all areas of learning and exceeding them in their personal, social and emotional development and their mathematical and physical development by the time they enter Year 1. Improvement since the last inspection is good.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very good and children achieve highly.
- Adults provide very good role models of caring and considerate behaviour.
- Children are given choices to help them learn to play and become more independent.
- Staff have very good knowledge of the children's needs and give this area of learning a high priority in all teaching plans.

Commentary

38. Children enter the reception class with attainment in line with the national average in this area of learning. The quality of teaching and learning is very good and consequently children's achievement is very good. Most children are on line to attain standards that are above the national average by the time they reach Year 1. Staff are very skilful at planning stimulating experiences to capture the children's interest. These help the children develop concentration skills so that they sustain attention and remain on task for often quite extensive periods of time.
39. After the register has been taken, children quickly become totally engrossed in the well-planned activities. They work with a high level of independence and have very good knowledge and understanding of their learning. Staff work hard to reinforce good learning attitudes. Effective questioning skills encourage children to make links in learning and to work things out for themselves within a well-structured framework. Children are trained well to tidy up after activities. They learn about hygiene as they

wash their hands before making biscuits or after using the toilet. Children are happy in school and join in activities willingly and co-operatively. They wait patiently to take their turn and take responsibility for tidying up, dressing and undressing themselves. They work and play collaboratively, benefiting from a wide variety of activities planned to develop increasing co-operation. As a result children become more involved and confident, often willingly taking responsibility for their own learning. Positive attitudes and confidence provide children with a very good start to their wider education.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is often very good and the children achieve well.
- Well-structured activities consolidate learning.
- Staff effectively model the use of language as a tool for thinking.

Commentary

40. Children are taught in groups according to their ability and this accelerates achievement in communication, language and literacy. With the exception of a few children with special educational needs, most children come into the reception class speaking clearly, audibly and with confidence. Good questioning skills enable children to reflect and structure their thinking. Children maintain the story line when talking to each other in the role-play area. There are many opportunities for children to practise their writing skills and most are beginning to use writing to communicate meaning. They enjoy books, turning the pages, pretending to 'read' to each other. Regular story times increase children's awareness of books and their enjoyment of stories. The children are given opportunities to develop secure early reading and writing skills in small closely targeted groups.
41. The children have been out of their classroom as it was redeveloped for three weeks prior to the inspection and the upheaval has had some impact upon their acquisition of new skills such as reading and writing. However, as a result of very good teaching most children will reach the goals expected by the end of the year and a small proportion of higher achievers will exceed them.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and the children enjoy their learning and achieve well.
- A high degree of challenge extends the learning of all children.

Commentary

42. Children's learning is made both exciting and enjoyable. All children show great enthusiasm as they play number detective to find the missing number. They know whether they are counting backwards or forwards. Higher achieving children count on in twos whilst lower achieving pupils use the hundred square to support their learning. Children are encouraged to develop the use of mathematical terms in real situations as they price the food on sale in 'Clever Cat's Café'. The very good direct teaching

observed enabled at least half of the children to become secure in counting to ten with the higher achievers counting to numbers over twenty. Children are working at full capacity all the time. Very good questioning by the teacher extends the children's learning. Activities are very well planned to meet the learning needs of all children. As a result, children achieve well and most are well on track to exceed the goals they are expected to by the end of the reception year.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children enjoy a wide range of interesting activities that give them an increasing number of experiences of their own world.
- Staff use questioning very effectively to enhance the children's knowledge and understanding of the world about them.
- The teaching and learning of the scientific element of this area of learning are very good.

Commentary

43. Teaching and learning are good and children achieve well, particularly in the development of early scientific ideas. At the beginning of the year, most are working at levels expected for their age. Imaginatively planned activities support learning well, stimulate children's curiosity and enhance their understanding. Children readily assume the important role of 'scientists' as they take their clipboards out to investigate floating and sinking. The children are really clear about what they have to do. Through skilful use of questioning and sensitive interaction by the teacher, children are beginning to predict, test and record their predictions and results. Playing with 'small-world' toys extends children's early experiences beyond the home and school, giving them the opportunity to make sense of a widening community. Children are confident in their use of computer programs. They use the mouse effectively to click and drag and are competent in their use of the keyboard. A high proportion of children are already working within standards expected by the end of the reception year, and a small number exceed them.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning is good and children achieve well.
- Learning in the outside classroom is effectively planned to give children a good variety of stimulating activities.

Commentary

44. Effective direct teaching helps children to make good progress in their skills so that they move with a high degree of control when dancing in a confined space. They replicate complex actions, clapping in time to the music and demonstrating control as they respond to change in the rhythm of the music. Children develop their manipulative skills well by handling scissors and brushes, carefully spreading icing on biscuits. They manipulate small construction equipment with dexterity. The often very good teaching

ensures that children achieve well and most exceed the goals children are expected to reach by the end of reception in this area of learning.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and a wide range of imaginatively planned activities extends the children's experience.
- Skills such as cutting and sticking are developed well and the children's achievement is good.
- Role-play and other well planned, stimulating activities encourage the children to use their imagination.

Commentary

45. The quality of teaching and learning is good and children achieve at least satisfactorily. A well-planned curriculum together with a wide variety of materials and media allow children to explore colour, texture, shape and form, using different tools with safety. They gain great enjoyment as they experiment with colour whilst they paint. The children sing simple songs from memory and match movements to the words. The teacher's commitment and enthusiasm create a very positive working atmosphere and as a result children have the confidence to sustain a story line when playing in the 'Clever Cat's Café'. All children are in line to achieve the early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well and attain standards that are well above average.
- Speaking and listening, reading and writing skills are taught well.
- Leadership and management of English are good.
- Library and reading resources are very good and impact positively upon pupils' learning.

Commentary

46. In the 2004 National Curriculum tests pupils in Year 2 attained above the national average in both reading and writing. The National Curriculum tests for pupils in Year 6 showed attainment to be well above the national average with a very high percentage of pupils gaining the higher standard of Level 5. These results represent pupils' very good achievement since they were in Year 2. Inspection findings indicate that current Years 2 and 6 pupils should attain similar standards in the 2005 tests. Standards have been well maintained since the previous inspection.
47. Speaking and listening skills across the school are above average and older pupils especially achieve very well. Even though there are a small but significant number of pupils with special educational needs or who have English as an additional language who need extra support with their communication skills, progress across the school is good overall and very good for the oldest pupils. There has been a good improvement since the previous inspection and this improvement reflects the refining of the programme of study implemented by the subject leader. Most pupils listen carefully and make thoughtful and appropriate replies and comments when taking part in class discussions and debates. Older pupils, especially in Years 5 and 6, listen very carefully to their teachers and each other and have developed very well the ability to identify key points in complex discussions and debate their own and others' opinions with maturity. They are using an increasingly complex, but accurate, vocabulary in their discussions, questioning well what others, including their teachers, have to say.
48. Pupils achieve well in their reading by the end of Year 2 and very well by the end of Year 6. Reading has a very high focus across the school. Good teaching includes the use of additional support, including parents, on a very regular basis. A careful teaching of skills as well as the opportunity to read together in a variety of ways enables pupils

to practise reading aloud in a group or in public. By the end of Year 6 most pupils are fluent and expressive readers. Their skills have been effectively developed through the school so that by the time they are in Year 6 very many are avid and very competent readers. Higher attaining pupils in particular read and understand well, well beyond a literal level, and use their skills well to research for information.

49. The school has focused on improving and extending pupils' writing skills and this has been very successful. Writing skills are now taught well across the school, equipping pupils to write confidently and competently in a range of genres and for different audiences. Extra time has been allocated in the week to provide opportunities for pupils to write at length and in different styles and this has enhanced the quality of pupils' work. Writing tasks have been particularly well targeted to capture pupils' interest across the curriculum in subjects such as history and religious education. The oldest pupils have a very good written vocabulary and write expressively and with humour, using their very good knowledge of grammar and very secure punctuation to make their work very readable.
50. Teaching and learning are good overall, with some very good and even excellent teaching seen, especially in Year 1 and the classes of older pupils. Generally, teachers relate very well to pupils and this has a good, positive effect on attitudes to learning. Teaching is at its best when the teacher has such knowledge, enthusiasm and positive relationships that pupils are totally involved with their own learning. Such lessons move at a very good pace, with plenty of challenge matched to pupils' confidence and abilities. Pupils know very clearly what they are expected to learn and how well they have done in the past from the marking of their previous work. Very high quality questioning skills ensure that all pupils fully understand core ideas. Across the school the teaching assistants and support teachers make a significant and central contribution to the way in which pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language learn. No unsatisfactory lessons were observed but, when teaching is weaker, the pace to lessons is slow and work is not planned sufficiently to challenge and extend the learning of all pupils. Teachers generally have high expectations of how pupils behave and present their work and provide a language-rich environment and good quality resources to enable pupils to learn well. Displays in classrooms and around the school celebrate pupils' written work, with careful attention given to presentation, ensure pupils have a sense of pride and this impacts positively on the learning of all.
51. Leadership and management of English are good. The experienced co-ordinator carefully and effectively monitors the work in classes, examines teachers' planning and lesson evaluations, promoting very well the progressive development of skills of both teachers and pupils alike. Her action plan for the subject is clear, detailed and focused on maintaining existing standards and raising them as high as possible. The co-ordinator provides good levels of support for colleagues based on her class observations and has a good understanding of the strengths and areas for further development within the subject.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

52. Overall, teachers provide many very good opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy skills in the work in other subjects. In history, pupils' reading and writing skills are well used and further developed. Researching the Tudors, using a range of historical texts, and writing about life from different periods and composing letters from key characters from the past are but a few examples in history. Pupils retell well known

Bible stories and factual information about different faiths in their religious education work, while older pupils write up their experiments in science using an appropriate scientific vocabulary.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well and attain standards that are well above average by the end of Year 6.
- Teaching is good overall.
- There is an effective system for monitoring and tracking pupils' standards and progress.
- Good leadership of the subject has identified the strengths and weaknesses in pupils' learning.

Commentary

53. Pupils achieve well, especially in Years 3 to 6, to attain standards that are well above average by the end of Year 6. Standards have been effectively maintained at well above average for the last four years and are an improvement on those seen at the last inspection. This consistent good standard is the result of clear identification of weaknesses in pupils' learning and improved teaching.
54. In Year 2 standards are broadly average. Most pupils are working within the standards expected for their age but few are attaining the higher than average standard of Level 3. This is similar to those judged at the previous inspection but not as high as they have been in the last three years. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in Years 1 and 2. Achievement is good in Year 1 but has fluctuated in Year 2 due to changing staff.
55. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. In some classes it is very good because pupils' work is well matched to their learning needs and builds successfully on what they already know and can do. Many teachers use the interactive whiteboards well to introduce new ideas and to support pupils' understanding. They explain new ideas clearly and structure their lessons well so pupils' knowledge and skills are steadily consolidated and extended. Higher attaining pupils are well challenged through tasks that require them to use what they already know to solve problems. In the best lessons, teaching assistants work closely with the teachers to support pupils of all abilities. They are particularly effective when supporting those pupils who have special educational needs or those who have English as an additional language. This was seen well illustrated in Year 3 and in Year 6. In the one unsatisfactory lesson seen activities were not as well matched to pupils' abilities and progress in learning was slow. The more able pupils and those of average ability were not sufficiently challenged by their tasks, although those with special educational needs were effectively supported and made good progress.
56. The school has developed an effective system for assessing pupils' attainment and tracking their progress. The assessment co-ordinator effectively monitors the standards of different classes and checks that pupils are making at least satisfactory achievement. Targets for pupils' future learning are shared with older pupils who are encouraged to be self-evaluative. When discussing their work with a group of pupils in

Year 6 they showed good understanding of how well they were doing and had high expectations for what they should achieve.

57. The co-ordination of mathematics has just changed. The previous co-ordinator provided good leadership and management, having analysed test data and the pupils' answers to identify weaknesses in their learning. This information has been shared with the new co-ordinator and staff so that a consistent focus is being given to maintaining good standards and strengthening areas of weaknesses. The new co-ordinator has not yet had the opportunity to monitor standards and teaching whereas the previous co-ordinator did so successfully.

Mathematics across the curriculum

58. Mathematics is used satisfactorily across the curriculum in subjects such as design and technology, geography and science. Graphs of different forms are used satisfactorily to present data in science, for example, but these do not feature strongly and pupils' knowledge could be put to greater use in supporting their learning across the curriculum. Similarly other subjects such as ICT could be used to greater advantage in supporting pupils' learning in mathematics.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well and attain standards that are well above average by the end of Year 6.
- Teaching is good.
- The use of investigation and exploration to strengthen pupils' understanding is improving.
- An effective system for monitoring pupils' standards has been introduced but insufficient use is made of data to track pupils' progress.

Commentary

59. Standards by the end of Year 6 are well above average and have improved steadily since the previous inspection when they were judged average. Pupils now achieve well through the school, especially in Key Stage 2 where teaching is good. By the end of Year 6 pupils have acquired a good range of scientific information and use their knowledge well to solve problems and to design tests to explore new ideas. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are inquisitive and enquiring, ask thoughtful questions and pose intelligent hypotheses when introduced to new ideas.
60. Standards in Year 2 are broadly average. This is not as strong as at the previous inspection and is not as high as standards have been over the past few years. Pupils achieve well in Year 1 but this progress has not been sufficiently maintained in Year 2 due to changing staff. In the Year 2 class many pupils are working at the standard expected for their age but there are fewer pupils attaining the higher standard of Level 3 as in the past.
61. The quality of teaching and learning are good, overall. From the evidence of pupils' work it is evident the teaching and learning are good and sometimes they are very

good. In the best lessons observed there were a good range of activities to extend and consolidate pupils' knowledge. This was very evident in the Year 1 class when pupils were learning about plants and how they grow. Generally, there is a good focus on developing pupils' curiosity so they want to know more. Relationships and behaviour are very good even when pupils get a little over excited in their search for information. Pupils work very effectively in groups, cooperating and negotiating in their tasks. Teachers monitor pupils' learning satisfactorily, assessing their knowledge and understanding at the end of each unit of work. This information is not sufficiently collated at present so that the school can monitor trends in standards and achievement.

62. Leadership and management of science are satisfactory. The co-ordinator provides good levels of support for colleagues. He has led the recent focus on providing more opportunities for pupils to engage in investigation and experimentation. Where these opportunities are planned effectively pupils' learning is successfully promoted but, from the evidence of pupils' work, these activities are still too few for consistent progress to be made. He has satisfactorily monitored pupils' past work and teachers' planning but does not have a secure hold of standards through the school. There is not a clear action plan for future improvement.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils make insufficient achievement given their abilities.
- Insufficient time is given to teaching the subject.
- Effective links with a local secondary school extends the learning of pupils in Year 6.
- The accommodation and aging computers restrict pupils' learning.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

Commentary

63. Standards in ICT are broadly average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, but this represents unsatisfactory achievement by the end of Year 6 given pupils' capabilities. Most pupils have computers at home that they use regularly. They are confident in using the Internet for research and apply themselves well to their activities in lessons. Over the last three years pupils in Year 6 have attained standards in English, mathematics and science that have been well above average and most are capable of attaining similar standards in ICT. In the lessons observed, pupils work quickly and efficiently at their tasks, understanding the principles of the activities and gaining understanding well. Lessons, however, were either too short or too infrequent for learning to be any better than satisfactory and so standards are not increasing the way they should.
64. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Teachers plan the lessons well and the skills taught are effectively linked with other subjects such as English, mathematics, history and geography, so supporting pupils' learning across the curriculum. Teachers' confidence and subject knowledge are satisfactory and enable them to explain new ideas so that pupils understand. The teachers have high expectations for pupils' good attention and behaviour in the computer suite and little time is wasted. However, only

the equivalent of 30 minutes a week is given to teaching ICT and consequently pupils' learning has insufficient depth for good progress to occur. The computer suite is rather small and will only accommodate half the class at a time. For some classes the lessons are planned for one hour with half the pupils alternating each week. This means that part of each lesson has to be given to reminding pupils what was done two weeks earlier.

65. The curriculum for ICT has improved since the previous inspection and is now suitably broad and balanced. Effective links have been made with a local college so that its staff expertise and equipment are used to extend the learning of pupils in Year 6. Opportunities to develop further pupils' knowledge and skills in modelling and control, for example, have been planned for later in the year.
66. The limitations of the computer suite could be overcome by more creative use of the interactive whiteboards situated in many classrooms. The whiteboards are used effectively as a teaching resource to support learning in other subjects, but teachers do not use the equipment currently to introduce the skills of ICT which could then be followed up either on the classroom computer or by groups in the suite. Computers are now coming towards the end of their life and the headteacher recognises that difficult decisions need to be made as to how to ensure the equipment meets the requirements of the curriculum and pupils' capabilities.
67. Leadership and management of ICT are satisfactory. The concerns of the previous report have been addressed but difficulties in the management of teaching and learning have not been sufficiently considered. Assessment procedures are satisfactory but there is insufficient tracking of pupils' progress in skills development to ensure sufficient achievement is made.

ICT across the curriculum

68. ICT is beginning to be used satisfactorily across the curriculum in terms of researching information for subjects such as history and geography, but insufficient time is given for it to be fully effective. There is little evidence of pupils presenting their work using ICT on a regular basis. Computer-generated graphs and tables are infrequently used. The use of interactive whiteboards, however, is developing well as a teaching resource for many subjects.

HUMANITIES

Religious education is subject to a Section 23 inspection as the school is of Catholic denomination.

69. Insufficient evidence was available to support overall judgements on provision in history and geography.
70. In **history**, work from pupils in Years 1 and 2 demonstrates an increased sense of chronology and effective use of portraits to recognise how some of the differences in the past are represented. Displays of work show good cross-curricular links with art that enhance pupils' understanding. There is evidence of a satisfactorily planned curriculum, but discussion with pupils showed that the amount of active learning to address the skills and key elements is limited. Several visits to local places of interest extend pupils' learning but other elements of first-hand experience are limited.

71. In **geography**, pupils demonstrate an effective progression in skills and geographical vocabulary as they contrast their own locality with Struay in Year 2 and Chembokoli in Year 4. A lesson seen in Years 4 and 5 demonstrated that, whilst teachers had good subject knowledge, the teaching lacked the excitement and motivation that enthuse and interest pupils. There is evidence of a satisfactorily planned curriculum and effective procedures are followed to assess pupils' attainment in both history and geography but the information on skills development is not clear. This has been recognised by the school and is a focus for future development.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

72. Only one lesson of **art and design** was observed so there is insufficient evidence on which to judge standards, the quality of teaching and learning or provision overall. In the lesson observed teaching and learning were satisfactory overall and the pupils' work on display around the school was of an average standard. As with other foundation subjects there is evidence of a satisfactory broad and balanced curriculum in art and design, but little in the way of additional activities to enhance pupils' learning such as an artist in residence or days/weeks focusing on the arts through which pupils' greater interest and skills are enhanced.
73. It was not possible to observe lessons in **design and technology, music** or **physical education** during the inspection and so judgements cannot be made about the quality of teaching and learning or standards and provision.
74. The curriculum for **design and technology** has improved since the previous inspection when it was an issue of concern and now meets statutory requirements. In discussion with the subject co-ordinator and pupils in Year 6 it is apparent that there is systematic development of pupils' skills through the school. Opportunities to investigate commercially made objects are used satisfactorily to support pupils' understanding of designing for a purpose and pupils evaluate their own working. Satisfactory links are made with other subjects such as science so pupils' activities have purpose and interest. Pupils enjoy their activities and the artefacts on display are of an average standard. Teachers satisfactorily assess pupils' work and progress against the learning objectives for the unit of work but information on pupils' skills development is not as yet sufficiently recorded. This has been identified by the school as an aspect for future improvement. The co-ordinator for design and technology has a clear view as to how the subject needs to improve further and has started to monitor and evaluate planning and standards.
75. **Music** is taught mostly on a Friday by a visiting teacher and so lessons did not take place during the inspection. The curriculum for music follows a well respected commercial scheme of work which provides a broad basis for pupils' learning. However, in discussion pupils could remember little detail of what they had covered. Pupils think that music is used well as a stimulus in subjects such as art to reflect mood and in religious education. However, they could not recall an opportunity to celebrate different cultural backgrounds within the school or to explore a broad range of world musical traditions; neither could they name a famous composer of any style of music. Pupils were heard singing during assemblies where their singing skills were just at the expected level for their ages. The school has recently appointed a new co-ordinator who aims to update resources to match the newly established commercial scheme of work and to start after-school music clubs as at present there are no musical extra-curricular activities such as a choir or instrumental groups. The school offers woodwind and violin lessons but parents have to pay for these. There are no formal assessment

systems in place for music.

76. The curriculum for **physical education** has been satisfactorily maintained since the previous inspection. Resources for physical education support a satisfactory range of games, dance and gymnastics skills. There are satisfactory procedures for monitoring pupils' standards in physical education and the school is looking to developing a skills-based programme that will further promotes pupils' learning. A number of out of school activities, such as netball and football clubs, are provided by outside agencies, mostly for pupils in Key Stage 2. These clubs support pupils' learning in lessons and extend their interest and skills. The large display of cups and trophies is testimony to the school's successes in league competitions with local schools.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education and citizenship is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Recent introduction of circle time discussions supports pupils' personal, social and health education development effectively.
- Pupils are enthusiastic about being members of the school council.

Commentary

77. The policy to support pupils' personal, social and health education is good and has been carefully constructed to reflect the caring ethos of the school. There are good procedures for teaching pupils about substance abuse and sex education in line with the school's Catholic ethos. Teachers use science, religious education, design and technology and physical education lessons to promote healthy living and lifestyles and good opportunities are provided within the timetable to talk about moral and social issues and citizenship.
78. Pupils are developing a good awareness of citizenship through their participation in the formation of a school council. There are elections for pupil representatives on the school council, so enhancing and supporting pupils' understanding of democratic principles and processes. Although fairly new, pupils are enthusiastic about their part in considering how the school can be developed and improved.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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