

INSPECTION REPORT

ST THOMAS MORE'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Colchester

LEA area: Essex

Unique reference number: 115205

Headteacher: Mrs B Harris

Lead inspector: Keith Sadler

Dates of inspection: 13th - 15th June 2005

Inspection number: 267960

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:	215
School address:	Priory Street Colchester Essex
Postcode:	CO1 2QB
Telephone number:	(01206) 865 722
Fax number:	(01206) 868 745
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr M Sheehan
Date of previous inspection:	25 th January 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St Thomas More's is an average sized primary school. There are 215 pupils on roll. The school is located in the centre of Colchester and serves three parishes within the town. Pupils come from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The percentage of pupils whose first language is not English is higher than in most schools. Children's attainment on entry to the school includes the whole ability range and is broadly as expected nationally. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs is well below the national average. The proportion of pupils who joined the school at other than the normal time of entry into Reception is relatively low. The school gained the Investors in People award in 2004.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
16405	Keith Sadler	Lead inspector	English as an additional language Science Information and communication technology Music Physical education
1112	Peter Oldfield	Lay inspector	
32963	Joan Lock	Team inspector	Special educational needs English Geography History
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

St Thomas More's is an **effective** school that provides **good value for money**. Teaching and learning are good, with some very good features. This encourages good learning and achievement. The headteacher provides very good leadership and management. She has had a very positive influence in the relatively short time she has been at the school. She has strengthened teamwork in the school and has the confidence of all stakeholders. The capacity for improvement is very good. Governance is good. There is a very good climate for learning and all pupils feel included. The impact of all these factors leads to standards that are improving.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The very good leadership of the headteacher.
- The good quality teaching.
- The pupils' attitudes, their behaviour and personal development are all very good.
- There is a need to make routine use of ICT in class lessons.
- The care, guidance and support of pupils are very good.
- The partnership with parents is very good and parents' level of satisfaction with the school is very high.
- Achievement is good.
- Standards, though improving, need to be raised higher.
- The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.

The school has shown good improvement since the previous inspection. Standards in ICT have improved considerably, though there remains work to be done in making wider use of ICT in lessons. There has been excellent improvement in the school's partnership with its parents which is now a strength of the school. The monitoring of teaching is now good, and the role of the headteacher in the whole range of school self-evaluation activities is very good.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*Key: A – well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average.
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

Pupils achieve well in relation to their ability. Children's enter the school with average attainment levels. They achieve well in the Foundation Stage and almost all children attain the expected goals. Pupils' achievement is good in Years 1 and 2 and, by the time that they reach the end of Year 2, standards in national tests are above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils continue to make good progress and achieve well in the junior years. Although standards in national tests are generally around the national average, there are signs of significant improvement. Inspection findings are that pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5 are on course to attain standards that are at least above the national average. There are indications that standards in most other subjects are at least in line with the national expectation. Pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language achieve well.

Pupils' personal qualities and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good. Their attitudes to learning and to each other are very good. Their behaviour is very good and the pupils enjoy their school and learning. The school has nurtured high levels of confidence and self-esteem in the pupils, and they thrive on the good opportunities for them to be enterprising and to take responsibility. The school has a very good climate of inclusion which helps the pupils to have very positive attitudes to learning and schooling. Attendance in the last reported year was below average though there has been significant improvement in the current school year.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good. The **quality of teaching** and learning is good, with almost two-thirds of lessons seen being good and the rest very good. Teaching is very good in the two infant classes. Pupils learn well because teachers encourage them very well, make effective use of resources and insist on high standards of behaviour. Teaching assistants make a very positive contribution to teaching and learning. As a result of the good teaching, the pupils work hard and their application and productivity in lessons is very good. The curriculum is sound and there is a very good range of opportunities to enrich the curriculum, particularly in musical and extra-curricular activities. The support, advice, welfare and guidance for pupils are very good. Pupils' education is aided by the very good links that the school has with the parents and by its good links with other schools and with the local community.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good. The leadership of the headteacher is very good and she is central to the positive changes in the school. In her short time at the school, she has gained the confidence of the whole school community and the impact of her leadership is substantial. The staff work together very well as a team. Subject leadership is good. Governance is good, with governors having a very good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They ensure that all statutory requirements are met. Financial management is secure and the school runs smoothly. The school has very good systems for judging how well it is doing.

PARENTS AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very satisfied with the school and they have positive views. In particular, they say that their children love attending the school and they make good progress. They also think that the teaching is very good and the school is well led. Pupils are proud of their school and thoroughly enjoy learning.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Ensure that ICT is planned for and used as an integral part of lessons.
- Continue with the planned improvements to raise standards.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well and almost all are on course to attain the goals expected. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well and attainment in Year 2 is generally above average. The pupils' achievement is good in the junior classes and, although standards at the end of Year 6 are broadly in line with the national average, there are indications that they are rising. Pupils in Years 3 to 5 are on course to attain above average standards.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good throughout the school.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve well.
- The school's focus on raising attainment in writing is having a positive impact, although standards need to be raised at the end of Year 6.

Commentary

1. In recent years in national tests, Year 2 pupils' attainment has been generally around the national average both in comparison with all schools nationally and similar schools. The school's improvement in tests since 2000 is broadly in line with the national trend. In the 2004 tests, results were outstandingly high in writing, with the school gaining results which were in the top five per cent nationally. This reflects the strong emphasis that the school has placed on strengthening standards in writing. Standards were in line with the national average in reading and above the national average in mathematics. In comparison with similar schools, standards were well below average in reading and average in mathematics. Inspection findings show that Year 2 pupils are performing at above nationally expected levels. This is as a result of the good quality of teaching and learning in the two infant classes which enables the pupils to achieve well and make good progress.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.1 (15.9)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	17.3 (14.2)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	17.1 (15.4)	16.3 (16.3)

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

2. Results in the 2004 national tests for Year 6 pupils show a picture of average attainment in mathematics and science but below average standards in English. This is in comparison with all schools nationally. Standards were broadly average in comparison with similar schools. The school met its 2004 targets and is on course to meet those for the current Year 6 pupils. Between 2000 and 2004, the school's improvement in Year 6 test results was below the national trend. The school is aware that the pupils' attainment needs to be improved and the headteacher has introduced a number of good strategies to raise standards. These are beginning to have positive effects. Pupils in Years 3 to 5 are on course to attain standards above the national average in English, mathematics and science. Standards have improved in writing, in particular. The school has revised its arrangements for the teaching and learning of writing and a strong emphasis has been placed on strengthening opportunities for pupils' speaking and listening skills. This strategy is paying dividends and, as a result, pupils throughout the school achieve well in English, both in lessons and over time. There is a similar pattern of good achievement in all year groups in mathematics and science. Improvements in the quality of teaching and learning since the last inspection have positively affected the

pupils' progress and achievement. Standards in ICT are in line with the national average and this too is an improvement since the last inspection, when standards were too low and pupils' progress limited. There is insufficient evidence to make firm judgements in other subjects though there are indications that standards are above average in music and design and technology.

3. One further strategy to boost attainment has been to develop provision for gifted and talented pupils. This project, developed in partnership with two other local schools, has helped these pupils to achieve particularly well in a range of curricular areas, including mathematics and science.
4. There is no difference between the attainment of girls and boys. Although the school has a relatively high proportion of pupils that speak English as an additional language, none of these is at an early stage of English language acquisition. These pupils achieve well and attain standards that are in line with those achieved by their classmates.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.4 (28.6)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	27.8 (29.4)	27.0 (26.8)
science	28.5 (28.6)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 31 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are strengths of the school. Their personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is very good. The rate of attendance for the last full reporting year was below the national average but records for this year show that attendance has improved.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy school and work hard.
- Behaviour is very good.
- The school develops the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness very well.

Commentary

5. Pupils say they enjoy school and their parents confirm this. They also work hard and have very positive attitudes to school and all its activities. These attitudes, along with their very good behaviour, are the results of the teachers' high expectations and the interesting and engaging lessons provided.
6. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well in the area of personal, social and emotional development. This is due to the good quality provision and wide range of integrated activities that focus on boosting the children's learning in this area. Almost all children are on course to achieve the early learning goals by the time that they leave the Reception class, with many children exceeding them.
7. Pupils work well as a whole class, and when they are put into pairs or small groups they get on sensibly. They move around the school in an orderly and mature way. In the playground, the pupils play together in a friendly way and there is no oppressive behaviour. There is a good range of strategies to help pupils make friends. For example, it is the responsibility of prefects to help anyone who has no one to play with, and there is a 'bus stop' to wait by in the

playground for anyone who wants to signal that they want to play and need to find a friend. There have been no exclusions in the past year.

8. Pupils' spiritual awareness is developed very well. The assemblies provide a religious experience in which every pupil can take a full part. A lighted candle gives a spiritual focus and the mood is one of reflection and contemplation. Both in lessons and at less structured times, pupils are encouraged to think of themselves as being valued and blessed with many gifts. They are asked to think of others, especially those less fortunate, and they raise money for charities, such as the Tsunami appeal. Spirituality is often built into the school day, as when pupils say 'Thank You' prayers in class before lunch. Spirituality is also encouraged by going to worship at the local church as well as by visits to the places of worship of other faiths.
9. Moral and social development is promoted very successfully. The school provides the pupils with a strong moral code so that they know right from wrong. The school listens to what the pupils have to say and takes on board their opinions and requests. Pupils say that if they are in trouble, teachers listen to them and treat them fairly. They know that if they have a problem, it will be dealt with straight away. Every class has its rules displayed on the wall and playground rules are prominently displayed in the playground so pupils are clear about what behaviour is expected both from themselves and others. There is a very effective school council where pupils discuss how the school can be improved. For example, the school council has played an important part in determining the school's rules. The school also takes steps to help pupils become more independent. Some Year 6 pupils are chosen as prefects and they see this as a privilege, saying, "It makes you feel good to be trusted". Others run an art club by themselves. Pupils are encouraged to take pride in their achievements by winning house points and being 'worker of the week' in Friday assemblies. They are pleased to represent their school at sports or by singing in the choir. A wide range of out-of-school activities also makes a good contribution to developing pupils' social awareness.
10. The school promotes cultural development very well. Lessons in history and geography promote awareness of other cultures whilst displays around the school celebrate and value different cultures. Visitors to school such as African drummers and a member of the Sikh community, together with cultural days such as the 'Chinese day' with a Chinese meal, contribute well to this area of learning.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 2003-2004 (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.0	School data	0.0
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

11. Over the past three years, the attendance rate has been below the national median but for this school year the school's authorised absence fell to 4.9 per cent, which brings the figure broadly in line with the national median. This is because the school has developed successful strategies for boosting the pupils' attendance. For example, the school now follows up all unknown absences with a telephone call and is cautious before agreeing to release pupils during term time. Pupils' punctuality is good.
12. Most pupils transfer to the local Catholic secondary school, St Benedict's College. Pupils are prepared well for their transfer and the 'gifted and talented' programme introduced by the school has included meetings with the secondary school to improve arrangements for the transition.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The curriculum is sound and is enriched by a good range of additional activities. Arrangements for the care, guidance and support of pupils are very good. The school's partnership with parents is very good.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good, with some very good features. All the lessons seen were good and many were better. Assessment is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils learn well and enjoy lessons.
- Teachers make good use of resources to support pupils' learning.
- Relationships are very good and teachers manage the pupils' behaviour very well.
- Teaching assistants make a significant contribution to the quality of teaching and learning.
- The teaching and learning of pupils with special educational needs is very good.

Commentary

13. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and it is very good in the two infant classes. This marks a significant improvement since the last inspection when teaching was found to be satisfactory in the infant classes and good in the Reception class and the junior classes.
14. The quality of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage is good, although over-directive at times. The experienced teacher is supported very well by a fully-time assistant who is fully involved in day-to-day activities supporting groups of pupils. All adults provide very good role-models. They are conscientious, caring and supportive so that there is a happy and secure learning environment for children. Lessons and activities are managed well and relationships are very good. All adults have high expectations so that children are very well behaved and motivated and show very good levels of interest in what they are expected to do.
15. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers plan lessons very carefully and effectively, ensuring that activities are pitched at just the right level to ensure that the pupils make suitable progress in their learning. In all lessons, the teachers are clear about what they want the pupils to learn and what the outcomes should be. These are shared with the pupils, which helps their learning because they understand how their current work builds on previous learning. A particularly strong feature of the teaching is the contribution that the teaching assistants make. Whether working with small groups or individuals, they support pupils' learning very well. Working with class teachers, they make a very effective contribution to the positive atmosphere and the pupils' very good behaviour and they help to focus pupils' learning. Teachers, particularly in the two infant classes, have high expectations of what the pupils can achieve and this helps to boost the pupils' learning as they strive to complete the challenging tasks set.
16. Teachers use assessment information well. Their questioning skills are good and, as a result, they can identify appropriate further work to meet pupils' needs. However, this is not always the case in the Foundation Stage, where there is a need to ensure that the teachers' assessments are better matched to the steps set out in the Foundation Stage curriculum.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 34 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0 (0%)	13 (38%)	21 (62%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages.

17. The table shows that almost two-thirds of teaching seen was good and over one-third very good. This shows a considerable improvement since the last inspection. The good teaching leads to the effective learning and good achievement evident in most subjects. Pupils thoroughly enjoy most lessons.
18. Staff working with pupils with special educational needs support teaching and learning very well. This helps to make pupils to feel included and enables them to make good progress in their learning. The work for these children is very well organised and based on sound procedures for assessment and recording.

The curriculum

Curricular provision is satisfactory. Opportunities for enrichment are good. Accommodation and resources for learning are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Curricular provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and is a strength of the school.
- Teachers do not make enough use of ICT in their planning of most subjects.
- A wide range of activities, visits and visitors enriches the curriculum for all pupils.
- The accommodation is barely satisfactory although the school makes good use of what is available.
- The school library, although recently re-sited, is too small and the book stock needs to be improved.

Commentary

19. The curriculum successfully meets all statutory requirements of the National Curriculum. This shows a marked improvement since the last inspection when provision for ICT and personal, social and health education (PSHE) was found to be inadequate.
20. In the Foundation Stage, a good range of interesting and relevant activities are linked to selected themes. Weekly and daily work is soundly planned and is linked to the recognised early learning goals.
21. The sound curricular opportunities in the infant and junior years are supported by the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy which are fully established and have been revised to provide well for the needs of St Thomas More's pupils. The development of curricular provision for gifted and talented pupils is a further positive feature of the curriculum.
22. There have been significant improvements in the curriculum for ICT and it now meets statutory requirements. However, there are still too few planned opportunities for pupils to make use of ICT in daily lessons.
23. There are good examples of cross-curricular links which help the pupils to practise skills in context and to see the links between areas of learning. Examples of these include the use of a good range of written genres in history and geography and links between history and design and technology.

24. There has been a growth in the range of extra-curricular activities since the last inspection. Pupils and parents commented on the benefit that this has brought. The school is now enriched by numerous visits, including a residential visit for Year 6 pupils, the use of the local environment and participation in sporting events and in local and national artistic events.
25. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and is a strength of the school. Their learning is supported by individual education plans which identify their needs very well. Pupils are fully involved in the setting of targets to improve their learning and one pupil with a statement for special educational needs wrote the invitations for her annual review. As a result, she was fully involved in the process and was very well informed as to why the meeting was being held and the contribution she would be making. Pupils are included very well because appropriate work is planned by the teachers. All pupils have equality of access to the curriculum and teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to this.
26. Provision for PSHE is good and successfully addresses sex education and drug and alcohol abuse. The school council successfully supports pupils' understanding and awareness of citizenship and the importance given to it demonstrates the school's commitment to valuing and listening to the views of all the pupils. In addition, a good emphasis is placed on preparing pupils for transfer to secondary schools.
27. Since the last inspection, there have been improvements in the accommodation, particularly in respect of the development of a good quality covered area for the Reception class. Although the school site is relatively small, the school has made very good use of the space available, which is on three different levels. The accommodation is barely adequate because some classrooms are much too small, particularly those for Years 5 and 6. Although there have been recent improvements to the library, the space and the quality and quantity of the book stock remain very limited. Governors are keenly aware of the limitations of the accommodation and have plans to address the issue.
28. There are sufficient teachers and support staff, with a good balance of experience and subject knowledge. The teaching assistants make a very positive contribution to the school's provision, particularly in supporting teaching and learning. In addition, they make other contributions which include providing extra-curricular activities. One very good example of this which supports pupils very well is the development of a 'Gym Trail' which is designed to help pupils with fine and gross motor problems improve their coordination. Resources for teaching and learning are satisfactory overall.

Care, guidance and support

The school very effectively promotes the pupils' welfare in a secure and caring environment. Appropriate guidance given to all pupils and their support is very well monitored. The school is very good at taking pupils' ideas and opinions into account.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Members of staff ensure that pupils work in a safe environment where levels of care are very good.
- Pupils are very well monitored and receive very good support and guidance.
- Pupils are given very good opportunities to make their views known.

COMMENTARY

29. The school has built upon the caring and supportive atmosphere identified in the last inspection by ensuring that pupils' ideas and opinions are properly taken into account through an active school council. The monitoring of pupils' personal development and academic progress has been very effective throughout the school and the need to allow pupils to express views has been welcomed. The school council is very well supported by staff and is

built upon a system of elected class representatives fully discussing the needs of the pupils so that all pupils can make their views heard. Each class has an 'ideas' box which class representatives discuss at the council meetings. This has led to pupils having a real say in the direction of the school. For example, they recently suggested and adopted rules for the cloakroom areas and they have agreed to purchase playground toys and to provide a quiet area in the playground. Senior staff are very supportive and welcome pupils' ideas and opinions and this helps to explain the very high percentage of pupils' questionnaire returns affirming that 'teachers do listen to their ideas'.

30. Pupils are at the centre of all that the school does. There are various strategies to give praise and raise self-esteem and these, combined with the very good relationships throughout the school, mean that all pupils are happy and feel able to fully concentrate upon their work. Staff know the pupils very well and generally support them very well, whatever their needs. Individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs have clear targets so the pupils can be helped to learn in small steps. The caring ethos of the school means that pupils feel happy to seek help when they have concerns, knowing they will receive the support they need.
31. Representatives from a good range of support agencies visit the school, including the school nurse and doctor.
32. Procedures for child protection are very good. The headteacher acts very effectively in this important role and has a comprehensive knowledge of all requirements. A governor also takes a special interest in this responsibility.
33. Pupils new to the school are given good support and are given 'buddies' to help them settle into school life. Appropriate arrangements for young children include booklets explaining how parents can help them become aware of school routines, so that they become able to adjust.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

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

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- THERE IS A VERY GOOD PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN HOME AND SCHOOL.
- The school works effectively with the local community.
- There are effective links with other schools and colleges.
- There has been a very significant improvement in the partnership with parents since the last inspection.

Commentary

34. The school has realised the value of a good partnership with parents and has improved its liaison with them. Now, a very high number of parents feel that they are kept well informed and feel comfortable about approaching the school or offering an opinion. This is very significant improvement since the last inspection when weaknesses were found in this area.
35. The school believes the very strong partnership with parents is important. It produces an annual report for parents of their children's progress in the spring term which is then supplemented by a summary report, with targets for the next year, in the summer term. This enables parents to be fully aware of the levels of working and targets needed for their children.

36. A weekly newsletter, the development of a school website and the provision of good opportunities to meet teachers each day mean that parents know more about the school and its life.
37. A large number of parents help regularly in the school and termly meetings with staff are always very well attended. This very strong partnership contributes well to pupils' learning. A well-organised parent-teacher association provides a good programme of social and fund-raising activities to help the school make purchases of equipment, such as sports equipment and interactive white boards. Their activities are well supported by the local community and by other parents.
38. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in the setting of educational targets for their pupils. They are encouraged to help their children at home and are assisted in this by the co-ordinator for special educational needs, who runs courses for them on matters such as how to help with spelling.
39. The school is now a popular part of the local community and of the parish. It has been well supported by some local concerns, including the local professional football club, the Wildlife Trust, a local archaeologist and the LEA music service.
40. The school has established good links with other local schools and colleges. There is a supportive link with other local Catholic schools and with the area group of schools. Mathematics development has been well supported by coaching from a local girls' high school. The school provides work experience opportunities for pupils from local secondary schools.
41. A very well developed link with the local Catholic secondary school allows pupils, including those with special educational needs, to make a series of introductory visits so that they are confident at transfer for this important part of their lives. They fully understand the purpose of such visits in helping them to prepare for secondary education.
42. The now well developed partnership and links with the wider community have contributed well to pupils' learning. This is a much needed improvement from the last inspection.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good. The headteacher is a very good leader and manager, with clear educational vision, a strong sense of purpose and very high aspirations for the school. Leadership and management by key staff are good. Very good management structures and procedures underpin the everyday work of the school, and the principles of best value are carefully observed. The school is governed effectively. The school provides good value for money.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The leadership and management of the headteacher are very good.
- The governors are effective in holding the school to account.
- Systems for school self-evaluation and monitoring are very good.
- Procedures for the professional development, performance management, deployment and workload of staff are very good.
- Day-to-day financial and administrative procedures are very well managed.

Commentary

43. The headteacher's leadership is inspirational and she is totally committed to the school. In her short time at the school, she has gained the confidence of the whole school community, and the impact of her leadership is substantial. She displays a clear vision and sense of purpose for raising achievement through consultation. She has high aspirations and a very good

understanding of what still needs to be done to raise standards further. These are successfully shared with all staff, governors, parents and pupils. She has established a very effective hard-working team that works very well together.

44. This is a very inclusive school which is popular and currently over-subscribed, there being almost 60 applications for the 30 available places in the Reception class. All pupils are valued and given the opportunity to contribute to the school's further development. Self-evaluation procedures are well established, involving all staff, governors, parents and pupils in identifying areas of strength and weakness. These form the basis of the development plan which is shared with all stake-holders and progress towards the key targets is regularly monitored by the senior management team and governors. The school carefully monitors pupils' performance using optional tests in English and mathematics and carefully analyses results to set group and individual targets. Partnership with parents, a key weakness in the last inspection, is much improved. Parents are highly supportive of the school and pleased that they are regularly consulted over many issues.
45. The school is managed very well. All staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities through written job descriptions which are regularly reviewed. The headteacher works very sensitively with staff to help them develop professionally and supports them in their work and professional development, for example through the Primary Leadership Programme. Staff with subject responsibilities are effectively monitoring and evaluating provision and standards in their particular areas. Several are relatively new to their posts but are hardworking and committed to raising standards.
46. The co-ordination of provision for special educational needs is very effective and ensures that these pupils are fully integrated into the life of the school and achieve well. The co-ordinator helps other staff with practical advice and resources.
47. Performance management procedures are well established for all teaching and support staff and this is helping to raise standards and identify areas for focused staff development. Induction procedures for staff new to the school are very good, ensuring that they are quickly assimilated. The school is successfully used as a placement for trainee teachers as part of the graduate training scheme. Teaching support staff are also encouraged to undertake regular training and qualify as higher level teaching assistants. The recruitment, deployment and workload of staff are very well managed and the school has already introduced procedures for remodelling the workforce. Support staff are well deployed to help teachers' work more effectively in and out of the classroom. Day-to-day procedures for finances and resources are secure and very well managed by the conscientious and hardworking administrative staff who make very good use of current technology for managing pupils' records and finances. They are very welcoming and make a significant contribution to the life of the school. The most recent financial audit identified no major weaknesses. Grants are used effectively and finances kept in very good order and monitored closely by the headteacher and responsible officer. The present large financial reserve has been set aside for the replacement of computers and for the possible expansion of the school. The school has effectively absorbed best value principles in the management and use of resources.

Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	641,218	Balance from previous year	93,457
Total expenditure	528,931	Balance carried forward to the next year	112,287
Expenditure per pupil	2,437		

48. The governance of the school is good. The governing body has several recently-appointed members who have quickly established themselves. It is well organised and led and brings together a wide range of expertise and experience to give effective support in many areas.

Governors are totally committed to the school and very supportive of the headteacher, staff and pupils. Discussions with them indicate that they have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. When other commitments permit, regular visits are undertaken during the school day to observe specific areas and consult subject leaders. Governors have identified monitoring procedures as an area for their own development and arrangements have been made to address this. The governing body influences and challenges the work of the school effectively through regular meetings of the full governing body and of its working committees. It takes an active role in preparing and monitoring the school development plan and ensures that all statutory responsibilities are met in full.

Particular aids for raising achievement further are:

- Very good leadership and management by the headteacher;
- Well motivated professional staff with very strong teamwork;
- Very well motivated pupils who enjoy school and want to learn;
- An effective and supportive governing body; and
- Very supportive parents.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

49. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good and it is well managed by the very experienced co-ordinator. Improvement since the last inspection has been good with the quality of teaching and standards maintained, improved outdoor facilities, including a covered area, and the revised curriculum fully implemented.
50. The children's attainment on entry to the Reception class is broadly similar to that expected nationally in all areas of learning. Most children achieve well and are likely to reach the nationally expected standards in all areas by the end of the Reception Year. This is because the quality of teaching and learning is good. The experienced teacher is supported very well by the teaching assistant who is fully involved in day-to-day activities, supporting groups of pupils. All adults provide very good role-models for the children because they work closely together and support each other very well. They are conscientious, caring and supportive so that there is a happy and secure learning environment for children. In addition, a good range of interesting and relevant activities are provided, linked to themes. Weekly and daily planning is sound and it is linked to the recognised early learning goals. Assessment is sound, though there is a need to ensure that assessments made match the full range of activities and stages that are provided in national guidelines.
51. Accommodation is good. It provides a safe learning environment with clearly defined areas designed to support all the early learning goals, although the Reception area is not completely enclosed to provide total security. Classroom resources are of good quality and well used. The outdoor play area facilities are good but would benefit from the development of a roadway where children can ride the large wheeled toys to develop awareness of space. There is limited access to adventurous climbing equipment although this is provided in the main school hall. There are small areas where children plant seeds and grow plants and there is regular access to the school playground and grassed area.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Adults provide very good role models and have high expectations.
- Adults provide a caring and supportive environment in which children quickly learn to co-operate and help each other.
- Relationships between children and adults are very good.
- Children's independence is developed very well.

Commentary

52. Most children are likely to exceed the standards expected by the end of the Reception Year. The vast majority achieve well because of the good teaching. High standards and caring relationships ensure that the children know what is expected of them, so that they quickly learn the correct way to behave. Praise and encouragement are used well and behaviour is very good. Children quickly settle into the daily routines of directed or self-chosen tasks with little fuss and they behave very well. They take good care of materials and equipment and move confidently round the classroom. They are given many opportunities to develop independence and co-operate with others, and share and take turns during activities. They are encouraged to clear away at the end of sessions and to take responsibility. The good teamwork of the adults gives the children very effective examples of co-operation, and their calm approach to work ensures that relationships are good. Most children show very good

levels of interest in what they are doing and are keen to learn. They go to the toilet unaided and most manage to dress themselves when changing for physical activities.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a strong emphasis on developing skills in speaking, listening, reading and writing and these are taught well.
- Reading materials are used effectively to provide a stimulus for writing and for creative development.
- Children are given good opportunities to form letters correctly and develop writing skills.

Commentary

53. Achievement is good in speaking, listening, reading and writing and most children are likely to exceed the nationally expected standards by the end of the Reception Year. Adults have a good understanding of how children acquire skills in language and develop their vocabulary and they encourage them well. There is a good balance of teaching with individuals, groups and whole class. Good use is made of questioning to encourage children to listen and think during supervised activities, ensuring that they take turns. They take a keen interest in what children have to say and this encourages them to develop further the confidence to speak. Each child's opinion and response are valued and this enables them to develop positive attitudes to learning. Children listen attentively when a story is read to them and join in well with favourite rhymes and songs. This helps develop speech, language and understanding. Further opportunities to develop listening skills are provided by tape-recorded stories on the listening centre and 'Talking Stories' on the computer.
54. Sounds are well taught using 'letter of the week'. Children learn to recognise sounds and simple words from their reading books and from the recommended word list through games and from classroom displays. Children regularly take books home to share with parents and carers, and there are many opportunities when they can look at books themselves. Most handle books with care, developing an understanding of how to turn the pages and an increasing awareness that print carries meaning. There are good links with speaking, reading and writing and these are developed well, with children talking and writing about their own experiences and reading books. All children write their names legibly and most write simple sentences unsupported. Standards of handwriting are good because of regular practice sessions to ensure children form letters correctly.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Adults plan a wide range of practical activities to promote children's mathematical development.
- Good use is made of mathematical language.
- Good use is made of resources to promote learning.
- At times, insufficient use is made of assessment to provide more challenging activities for higher-attaining children.

Commentary

55. Most children achieve well and are likely to reach the expected standards by the end of the Reception Year. Teaching, learning and provision are good, with staff planning a wide range of activities to promote mathematical understanding and making good use of equipment and resources. However, occasionally children are not given enough opportunity to investigate independently and discover for themselves. Assessment is not always used to plan activities for children of different abilities and to challenge higher-attaining children. Children are encouraged to count, match and order numbers to 20. They identify plane and solid shapes and their properties and higher-attaining children add and subtract numbers to 20. The good quality and range of resources are used effectively to support children in their learning. Children have regular opportunities to explore the properties of sand and water. Adults ensure they use correct mathematical words to develop and extend children's understanding of mathematical language.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a good range of interesting and imaginative activities to promote learning in this area.
- Adults use questioning effectively to extend the children's knowledge and understanding of the world about them.
- Children have regular access to, and confidently use, computers and listening centres.
- There are few opportunities for observational and interactive displays to develop children's investigative skills, using resources such as mirrors, magnifying glasses, torches and magnets.

Commentary

56. Achievement is good and most children are likely to achieve standards above the nationally expected level by the end of the Reception Year. The quality of teaching, learning and provision is good and children make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world. The classroom is well organised with a range of activities to stimulate children's natural curiosity and enthusiasm. These include road and water layouts, small world toys linked to story books, simple construction kits and a small role-play area (currently a café). There is a good range of visits and visitors to extend children's knowledge and awareness beyond the classroom. Opportunities are provided for children to develop early scientific skills through simple observations such as those of the life-cycle of plants that have been grown by the children. They explore and handle a wide range of materials and tools as they make models, create collages and work with water, sand and a wide range of construction materials. They begin to learn about their own culture and those of others and how to live harmoniously together, through weekly religious education lessons. Children have regular access to a computer in the classroom and to the computer suite and most can use the mouse and keyboard to design and print pictures and control objects on the screen. They learn about other places in the world by watching a television programme of the adventures of 'Barnaby Bear' and through the teacher's challenging questioning. However, teaching is sometimes too directive and children have insufficient opportunities to investigate for themselves, using resources such as magnets, magnifying glasses, mirrors and torches. Assessment is not always used effectively to provide appropriate activities to challenge different ability groups, especially higher-attaining children.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Hand and eye co-ordination is effectively encouraged in a variety of activities that require the use of small hand tools, crayons, pencils and brushes.
- Children respond well to instructions from adults during lessons.

Commentary

57. Most children achieve well and are likely to exceed the expected standards by the end of the Reception Year. The quality of teaching, learning and provision is good and children make good progress. Outdoor play provision is good and has improved since the time of the last inspection. Children move freely, with growing confidence, and are developing sound awareness of space and others. They play confidently with large wheeled toys and are encouraged to take turns. Most respond very well to instructions, stop and start on request, and clearly enjoy the opportunities provided during outdoor physical education lessons. Adults are clearly aware of health and safety issues as they support children. There is regular access to the facilities in the hall for running, jumping, climbing, gymnastics and dance. Children are given a wide range of opportunities to develop their co-ordination and manipulative skills by cutting with scissors, handling glue sticks, making models and painting with a range of brushes. There is a good range of construction kits and jigsaws which are readily available to develop co-ordination and small muscle control.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good use is made of role-play to develop children's creativity.
- There is a good range of planned creative activities which are well resourced.
- Good links are made between creative development and other areas through the themed approach.

Commentary

58. Most children are likely to attain standards that exceed expectations by the end of the Reception Year because staff provide a good range of opportunities to promote creative development. The quality of teaching, learning and provision is good and children progress and achieve well. Planning and displays show that children successfully develop their imagination and creativity through the use of art and design, role-play, music, stories, and small world toys. Samples of work indicate children confidently use paint to create imaginative pictures of themselves and of 'Elmer the Elephant' and they make 'Bubble Pictures'. They make leaf prints and masks, and learn to join and stick, using recycled materials to make objects such as beds for teddy bears and boats. Good quality resources are plentiful and well used. Children readily take part in role-play activities and make up imaginative stories, using props such as a pirate hat. These activities also develop skills in speaking and listening.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

- Standards are average in comparison with all schools, but below average when compared to those in similar schools.
- Pupils are achieving well.
- Pupils are very well behaved and keen to learn.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- Leadership is good.

Commentary

59. Pupils of all abilities are achieving well. This is as a result of the strong emphasis that the school has placed on raising standards. National test results in 2004 were above the national average in Year 2 and close to the average in Year 6. However, inspection findings are that standards at the end of Year 6 are set to rise. Currently, pupils in Years 3 to 5 are achieving particularly well and are on course to achieve at least above average standards when they leave the school. Standards at the last inspection were above average so this represents satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.
60. Pupils across the school enjoy reading. They can use a variety of strategies to help with their reading. For example, a Year 6 pupil was able to explain the technique of dividing words into syllables and a six-year-old could spell a word out and use the accompanying pictures for clues as to what the word was. In Year 6, some pupils show good levels of comprehension and can appreciate subtleties of text and infer ideas and feelings. For example, a pupil could explain what it must feel like to be without parents after reading about the orphans in *Lemony Snicket* going to live with their guardian. Pupils enjoy unusual vocabulary. A Year 1 pupil was intrigued and amused by the expression a 'puncheon of Jamaica Rum' in *Swallows and Amazons*. They can explain clearly why they like certain books, giving informed reasons for their choice. One pupil's favourite author was J.K. Rowling because her books "get so exciting you don't want to put them down". Pupils use the library, indexes, glossaries and contents pages to extract and obtain information from books and they use these research skills to support their work in other subjects.
61. The school has recently focused on improving standards in writing and, as a result, pupils are achieving well. In Year 6, the pupils know how to write in different styles depending on the purpose, adapting, for example, to the demands of a play script or a poem. Pupils show a developing interest in colourful and unusual vocabulary and use words skilfully to make their writing interesting and lively. For example, one group wrote a poem in the style of the Pied Piper and, in another group, a pupil described a magical pony thus: "He had a long swishy tail and his eyes glowed at you like diamonds". Pupils' work is well presented; they are using the skills of spelling, grammar and punctuation with increasing consistency.
62. Pupils achieve well in speaking and listening. They enjoy their lessons and will listen enthralled to a story. They respond well to teachers' questioning and will join in class discussions. They listen to each others' views with respect and enjoy putting various sides to an argument. They are quite happy to challenge a teacher on a point of information but will do so appropriately and politely. Teachers encourage the skills of speaking and listening well by the use of 'talking partners'. In this approach, pupils are frequently asked to discuss teaching points with each other. As a result, pupils can express ideas and opinions well, giving extended answers and using rich vocabulary.
63. Pupil's behaviour in lessons is very good and they are keen to learn because of the interesting, enjoyable and well paced lessons. Teaching and learning are good overall and it is very good in Years 1 and 2. The school has recently put great emphasis on the teaching of writing and there is strong evidence that this has resulted in standards improving. The

strategies teachers use to promote independent writing are well thought out and, as a result, pupils are motivated and confident. Teachers have based their planning on the National Literacy Strategy and so ensure that pupils build on their learning in logical, sequential steps. Pupils work hard and respond well to the clear targets that are set. Teachers and support staff liaise well to make sure work is well matched to pupils' levels of understanding and all, including the most able, are challenged well. Assessment of pupils' learning is detailed and supports teachers' planning well and the use of National Curriculum Record booklets for each child is a useful approach to recording and assessment. However, teachers do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to develop and practise their skills in using ICT.

64. Teachers and teaching assistants work very well with class teachers to support pupils with special educational needs. The careful learning programmes they provide ensure that these pupils achieve well.
65. The co-ordination of English is good. The co-ordinator, who is new to the post, has worked hard to develop the subject and to improve standards and there is evidence that this is bearing fruit. She carefully monitors standards and the quality of teaching and learning and, once strengths and weaknesses are identified, attention is focused on bringing about improvement. A good example of this is the way standards in writing are improving. The co-ordinator has taken the advice of the local authority's literacy consultant and introduced planning formats for teachers that are sharper and geared to raising standards. The co-ordinator contributes to the school development plan and the development of literacy is a key theme for the plan for 2005-2006.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

66. Pupils use their English skills well in other subjects such as history and geography and some particularly good examples of extended writing were seen in history. The strategy of 'talking partners' is used very effectively in most subjects and some good examples of this were seen in science. However, the library is very small, with a limited stock of non-fiction books so opportunities for researching or simply browsing through books are restricted.

MATHEMATICS

Provision for mathematics across the school is **good**.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good.
- Standards are improving across the school because of effective planning and improved teaching.
- The mathematics curriculum and lessons are well planned.
- Pupils are keen to learn, enjoy their lessons, try hard and behave very well.
- Results of assessments are carefully analysed to identify strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning.
- Recently installed interactive whiteboards are used well to support learning.
- The use of mathematics in other subjects is not systematically planned or developed.

Commentary

67. Standards at the end of Year 2 are above the national average, which is an improvement on those found at the last inspection. At the end of Year 6, standards are broadly average which

is not as good as at the time of the last inspection. All pupils, including those identified as having special educational needs, achieve well. There is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls and all pupils are fully involved in all activities.

68. The results of national tests for seven-year-olds in 2004 were above the average compared with schools nationally and broadly average compared to similar schools. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher level was above average. National test results in 2004 for eleven-year-olds showed standards that were close to the national average in comparison with all schools nationally, but below the average for similar schools. Over the past four years, there has been no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls. Most pupils are very well behaved in lessons and have a positive attitude to mathematics. They work very well both individually and with others, showing a keen interest in what they are asked to do and try hard showing very good concentration and persistence. They show very good respect for what others do and say and relationships are usually very good.
69. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers are enthusiastic, have good knowledge of the subject and make good use of national guidance. Lessons are well planned and usually provide challenging and suitable activities for different ability groups. Most lessons begin briskly and learning intentions are clearly shared with pupils so that they know what they will be learning and doing and this provides motivation and raises awareness. Teachers include, encourage and engage pupils very well. Their high expectations result in most pupils being well motivated, keen to learn and very well behaved. Most pupils work very well independently and in groups. Lessons proceed at a good pace and resources are used effectively to support pupils in their learning. Significant strengths in most lessons are the very positive relationships and the good management of pupils. Teaching assistants are used well to support groups of pupils, especially those identified as having special educational needs. Teachers make good use of interactive whiteboards which provides good motivation for pupils.
70. Leadership and management are good. The recently-appointed subject leader is enthusiastic and has a clear understanding of the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school. He has already embarked on observing other teachers, reviewing both teachers' planning and pupils' workbooks and, as a result, he has identified strengths and weaknesses in the subject. These have been featured in the school development plan, shared with other staff and appropriate action is now being taken. In addition, the results of annual national and non-statutory tests are carefully analysed. Information gained is shared with colleagues and used well to group pupils within classes and to set targets. The results are also used well to track pupils' progress and set end-of-year targets. Governors are kept well informed through meetings with the subject leader and lesson observations.

Mathematics across the curriculum

71. The use of mathematics across the curriculum is satisfactory, although links between mathematics and other subjects are not systematically planned and this is an area for development. The school has identified the need to improve the use of information and communication technology to support pupils in their learning and has installed interactive whiteboards and made recent purchases of software.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a good emphasis placed on developing pupils' investigative skills, particularly in Years 1 and 2.
- There is no permanent subject leader for science.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good.
- Pupils' achievement is satisfactory in Years 3 to 6 and good in Years 1 and 2.

Commentary

72. In national tests for 11-year-olds, standards are average both in comparison with all schools nationally and similar schools. Inspection findings confirm these results. Pupils enter Year 1 with average attainment and, due to good teaching, they make good progress and achieve well in the infant classes. By the end of Year 2, standards are above average. Pupils make satisfactory progress through the four junior years and their achievement is sound. This includes pupils with special educational needs. Currently, pupils in Years 4 and 5 are on course to achieve standards that are above the national average.
73. A suitable emphasis is placed on the teaching and learning of scientific skills, and investigative work is generally of a sound standard. In a very good Year 1 lesson, for example, pupils were studying light and shadows and the class teacher took the pupils to the playground where they were given challenging opportunities to discover the relationship between the brightness of the sun and the darkness of the shadows. Because the teacher asked a good range of open-ended questions and allowed the pupils to find out for themselves, the pupils' achievement was very good and they attained high standards. Similarly, in a good Year 2 lesson, pupils were learning how to test predictions. They were encouraged to predict and then to investigate whether taller pupils have bigger feet. The teacher encouraged the pupils to consider for themselves how they would test their predictions.
74. Pupils progress satisfactorily in the junior classes although there has been an under-emphasis on investigational aspects of science and, as a result, their overall progress has slowed. However, there are plans to boost this aspect of the pupils' work.
75. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers plan lessons well and they give good opportunities for pupils to plan and design their own experiments. In the best lessons, the teachers have high expectations of what the pupils can achieve and they encourage them to adopt their own good use of scientific vocabulary.
76. Leadership and management of the subject are both satisfactory. The school recognises that there is a need to appoint a permanent subject leader and there are clear plans to achieve this.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There has been very significant improvement in provision since the last inspection.
- Pupils still have too few opportunities to use ICT in lessons other than those in the ICT suite.
- In dedicated ICT lessons, the quality of teaching and learning is good and pupils achieve well.

Commentary

77. There has been significant improvement in the provision for ICT since the last inspection, though there remains some work to be done. At the time of the last inspection, standards were below national expectations and pupils' progress was unsatisfactory. Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are now in line with national expectations. Pupils achieve well in ICT

lessons held in the suite, though less well in making use of ICT in other subjects. Hence their achievement overall is satisfactory. The school has placed a particular emphasis on the teaching and learning of ICT since the last inspection and this is having a positive impact on standards. Pupils' achievement in dedicated lessons in the ICT suite is good because the quality of teaching and learning is good and pupils are supported well. The present Year 6 pupils have not had access to the increased provision over time and, as a result, their standards are still average.

78. The quality of teaching and learning is good, with some lessons being very good. Teachers have good knowledge of the subject. In a very good Year 2 lesson, pupils attained above average standards when they were making a plan for non-chronological writing. They were adept at using the keyboard, could save and retrieve their work and they progressed well. In another very good lesson, the Year 6 teacher taught pupils how to control more than one output device by dividing programs into sub-procedures. They were able to create a sequence of instructions to control the devices which, on this occasion, was to control the horn and lights in a lighthouse simulation. Lessons are taught at a brisk pace with many opportunities for pupils to participate.
79. At present, the school does not make sufficient use of ICT in lessons other than those in the ICT suite. The school is keenly aware of this issue, and is making plans to ensure that this aspect of ICT work can be extended. For example, a school-wide wireless network has been installed to enable the good stock of laptop machines to be used. This is beginning to impact positively on work in Years 3 and 4 where a wireless network is already in place. However, much needs to be done to provide opportunities to research work in history, geography and religious education as well as using the machines routinely for word-processing.
80. Leadership and management are good. The subject leader has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the teaching and learning of ICT. Lessons and planning are monitored closely. In-service training has been profitable and has had a direct and positive effect on the quality of teaching and learning. Areas identified as requiring improvement in order to support the continued development of pupils' standards in ICT are being addressed through well-written action plans that form part of the school improvement plan.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

81. Pupils' learning across the curriculum is supported suitably during ICT lessons in the suite. Junior pupils have used a paint program to produce work in the style of Van Gogh and to research his work on the Internet. Year 1 pupils have produced tally and bar graphs as part of their work in geography. Year 4 pupils have word-processed stories. However, the work across subjects is limited, owing to the lack of opportunity in most lessons.

HUMANITIES

82. Only one **history** lesson was observed and no **geography** lessons were seen so it is not possible to make judgments about overall provision in these subjects. A scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with them as well as scrutiny of teachers' planning show that there is an appropriate emphasis on developing the practical aspects of the subjects, such as collecting and investigating evidence and looking at both sides of an argument, which supports their learning well. It is evident from discussions with pupils that their knowledge is good. Co-ordination of the subjects is good, with a clear programme based on national guidelines which ensure pupils build on their understanding in a logical way. A range of visits, such as those to the local World War 2 Museum, visiting speakers and the residential trip to the Isle of Wight for the older pupils support these subjects well.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

83. Too few lessons were seen to enable judgements to be made in any of the subjects in this area. As a result, there are no judgements on provision in **art and design, design and technology, music** or **physical education**.
84. There was insufficient evidence available to make a secure judgement on standards in **art and design** at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. In the one lesson sampled, the quality of teaching and learning was good and the lesson was well planned. The enthusiastic teacher managed the lesson efficiently and most pupils achieved well. Pupils were well motivated and clearly enjoyed the lesson. The subject leader is enthusiastic and provides good support to colleagues. The subject is soundly planned, following national guidance, to ensure progression of skills and knowledge. Satisfactory annual assessments are made, linked to the levels set out in the National Curriculum. Resources are satisfactory and are being updated. Although pupils have sketchbooks, their use is inconsistent across the school. It is not possible to comment on progress since the last inspection because of lack of evidence.
85. From the one lesson observed and samples of work, there are indications that standards in **design and technology** at the end of Year 2 are above the level expected nationally. However, there was insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement on standards in Year 6. The lesson seen was well planned and the teacher displayed enthusiasm and good knowledge of the subject. The aims of the lesson were clearly explained so that pupils understood what they had to do and they achieved well. Pupils were well motivated and had a good understanding of the properties of materials from previous lessons as they designed a costume for a super-hero. They worked well, showing good concentration and application, and were very well behaved. Good attention was paid to the planning, designing and making stages, with a clear focus on developing skills before making the final product. Pupils enthusiastically explained how they had made the good quality sock puppets and moving toys on display and they evidently enjoy design and technology.
86. There has been good improvement in the subject since the last inspection when there were significant weaknesses in long-term planning and resources. Both of these have been successfully addressed. The subject is now soundly planned, using national guidance, to ensure progression of skills and knowledge and all areas of the National Curriculum are covered. The subject leader is enthusiastic and has worked hard to develop resources to support each unit of work and these are now adequate. There are clear plans to develop the subject. Satisfactory annual assessments are undertaken, linked to guidance provided in the National Curriculum.
87. **Music** plays an important part in the life of the school. Standards are well above the national expectation in singing, and discussions with pupils and the subject co-ordinator suggest that standards may well be at least above average in other aspects of the subject. The school has a specialist music teacher who takes some music lessons and conducts singing lessons for all classes. In the two singing lessons observed, in Years 1 to 3, the quality of teaching and learning was very good and the pupils sang tunefully, maintaining their own part very well, with some pupils singing solos and duets. Their singing was very expressive and the pupils thoroughly enjoyed singing a two-part song. In both these lessons, the specialist teacher was very well supported by the teaching assistant who made a significant contribution to the high quality of teaching and learning.
88. Many of the school's teaching staff are musicians and they use their instrumental expertise to support pupils' learning in school performances. Some members of the school choir performed in the Royal Albert Hall in the week before the inspection and they thoroughly enjoyed singing many of the songs learned for this event during a lunchtime choir session. This was an uplifting experience and the pupils sang a wide range of blues, rock, pop and show songs very well, with control and inspiration.
89. One **physical education** lesson, in Year 1, was observed. This dance lesson was taught very well, with the pupils achieving expected standards. Reviews of the curriculum for physical education suggest that the school provides an above average range of experiences for pupils.

There are good opportunities for pupils to experience the full range of the physical education curriculum which is complemented by a wide range of extra-curricular sporting activities. The subject is well managed by a knowledgeable and enthusiastic subject leader.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION

90. Only one lesson was seen in PSHE and it is therefore not possible to make a judgement on provision in this area. In the good Year 6 lesson, pupils were considering the potential for re-use of objects as part of a unit of work focusing on environmental sustainability. In this lesson, the pupils showed very good and sensitive understanding of the issues involved in recycling. They achieved well, and discussion with pupils demonstrated that they have a mature and responsible attitude to the environment.
91. It is evident that the subject makes a strong and positive contribution to the life of the school. Lessons are timetabled each week and the curriculum is well planned and organised. The school places a very strong emphasis on personal, social and health education and it is an aspect of learning that is well supported in classes. The pupils' personal and social education is very good. It has a positive impact on all that the school seeks to do in terms of developing confident people. The school works hard to ensure that pupils work and operate harmoniously.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

INSPECTION JUDGEMENT

Grade

The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3

Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	5
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	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
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	3

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	3
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).