

INSPECTION REPORT

ST WALBURGA'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Bournemouth, Dorset

LEA area: Bournemouth

Unique reference number: 113898

Headteacher: Mr Robert Dare

Lead inspector: Mr Keith Edwards

Dates of inspection: 13–16 September 2004

Inspection number: 267963

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:	423
School address:	Malvern Road Moordown Bournemouth Dorset
Postcode:	BH9 3BY
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Pat Marchiori
Date of previous inspection:	22 February 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St Walburga's Catholic Primary is a church aided school, which secured an Achievement Award in 2003 and the Investor in People Award in 2004. Numbers on roll have reduced slightly since the time of the last inspection and there are now 423 full-time boys and girls. The school draws most of its pupils from the immediate locality but an increasing number are drawn from further afield. Almost all of the pupils are white and almost all come from homes where English is the first language. Three per cent of the pupils have an entitlement to free school meals. This is well below the national average.

There is one intake into the Reception classes during the course of the year. Most of the children who start in the Reception class have had the benefit of pre-school experience. The attainment of the pupils on entry to their Reception year is broadly average although there is a significant variation in the pupils' achievement at the start of their full-time education. The children are taught in single-age classes and there is a wide spread of ability in each class. Fourteen per cent of the pupils are on the school's register for special educational needs. This is below the national average. Five pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Needs.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21190	Keith Edwards	Lead inspector	Information and communication technology Music English as an additional language
32677	Brian Horley	Lay inspector	
22831	Clive Lewis	Team inspector	English History Geography Special educational needs
12116	Christina Morgan	Team inspector	Science Physical education
8420	Valerie Roberts	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Mathematics Art and design Design and technology

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a very effective school that has many very good features. The headteacher and senior staff provide very good leadership and management. Each member of the school community is valued and there is very effective teamwork. The quality of teaching is good and there are particular strengths in Years 5 and 6. The school gives very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards are well above average in English, mathematics and science. In the 2003 national tests for the pupils in Year 6, standards were well above those in similar schools.
- The headteacher has high aspirations for the school and has successfully built on the strengths identified in the last report. The school is very well supported by the governing body.
- The pupils' personal qualities are developed very effectively by the school. Their attitudes to learning and their behaviour are very good.
- The school provides very well for those pupils with special educational needs.
- The school has developed very good links with the parents and the community. The arrangements for the transfer of pupils to their next stage of education are excellent.
- There are no significant weaknesses.

Improvement since the last inspection in February 1999 has been very good. Standards in the Year 6 tests have continued to rise in line with the national trend. The school has ensured that there has been a very good improvement in the provision for information and communication technology and, as a result, standards are rising rapidly. The school has eliminated the small pockets of unsatisfactory teaching reported in the last inspection. Standards in design and technology and art and design are now satisfactory, although the school recognises that more could be done to develop the aesthetic side of the curriculum.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	A	A*	B	A
mathematics	B	A	A	A
Science	A	A	A	A

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

Overall, the **achievement of the pupils is very good**. The children make good progress in the Reception classes because the pupils feel secure and the quality of teaching is good. The pupils continue to achieve well in Years 1 to 4. The pupils achieve very well in Years 5 and 6, particularly in English, mathematics and science. This is because the teachers know the pupils well and ensure that the work set is well matched to the pupils' needs. The A* in the table above shows that the school's results for English at Year 6 in 2002 were in the top five per cent nationally. Standards in information and communication technology are now above average in Year 6 because of the systematic programme of work that has been introduced. Standards in music and the humanities are above average. Throughout the school, the pupils who have been identified as having special educational needs and those pupils who are learning English as an additional language achieve very well. This is because they receive high quality individual support and the teaching of the basic skills of reading, writing and numeracy is very systematic.

Because the school's provision is extremely effective, **the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.** The pupils grow to become mature, confident and responsible. The pupils have very positive attitudes towards school and their behaviour is very good. The pupils enjoy coming to school and attendance levels are well above the national average.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a **very good quality of education.** The **teaching is very good** in Years 5 and 6 and good overall. Throughout the school, the teachers have developed very effective working partnerships with the teaching assistants and they plan very well together across each year group. The teachers make very good use of assessment information to provide a very good level of challenge in literacy and numeracy lessons. Furthermore, the setting arrangements for mathematics lessons in Year 6 are very effective. Tasks are very well modified for different groups of pupils so that they apply themselves well and work hard. The provision for those pupils with special educational needs and those who are learning English as an additional language is very good.

The curriculum is good. Strengths include the school's provision for teaching literacy and numeracy. The curriculum is very inclusive. The headteacher and staff work closely together to ensure that all receive similar experiences and opportunities. The school provides a good number of activities outside of the school day. There is very good provision for extra-curricular sport. Good progress has been made in developing the accommodation to meet the demands of the curriculum, particularly for information and communication technology. The school has formed very good partnerships with the parents and the community. It provides very well for the care and welfare of its pupils.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The headteacher has achieved his vision to create a very effective school through his commitment to high standards and his belief in teamwork. The ethos of the school is very good. Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds feel secure and confident and this enables them to achieve well. **The quality of leadership and management is very good.** The headteacher has motivated and empowered his colleagues to settle for nothing but the best. The teamwork between members of staff is a strength of the school. Subject leaders have established an atmosphere that encourages an open discussion of effective classroom practice. This, together with the more formal programme of monitoring of teaching and learning, continues to improve the quality of teaching. The governors provide very good support for the work of the school. They fulfil their statutory duties and are very successful in maintaining the ethos. Financial systems are secure. Because the school is so successful, it provides very good value for money.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very satisfied with the school and think highly of it. The pupils are proud of their school and feel they are valued and very well supported.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

There are no significant areas where the school needs to improve. The school plans to continue to enrich the curriculum and the inspection team fully endorses this objective, particularly in terms of the creative arts and its provision for multi-cultural education. The school also recognises the need to develop its assessment procedures in information and communication technology.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

The overall achievement of the pupils, including those with special educational needs, is very good. Standards in English, mathematics and science are well above average in Year 6. This is because the pupils are well taught and the school's assessment procedures in these subjects are very effective.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in English, mathematics and science are well above average in Year 6 and have improved significantly since the last inspection.
- In the national tests (SATs) for pupils in Year 6 in 2003, standards were well above the national average and the pupils' achievement was well above that of pupils in similar circumstances.
- Current standards in reading, writing and mathematics in Year 2 are above average.
- Pupils with special educational needs and those who are learning English as an additional language make very good progress.
- By the end of the Foundation Stage, most of the children are likely to exceed the goals set for them in each of the areas of learning.
- Pupils are making good progress in acquiring skills in information and communication technology and standards exceed expectations in Year 6.

Commentary

1. Attainment on entry to the Reception class is broadly average. Even at the very outset of their very first term at school the children are settling well into their new routines and are readily accepting responsibilities. The children achieve well in each of the areas of learning because the adults are such good role models and provide a rich variety of experiences for the children. This not only contributes significantly to the children's personal development but also to their good progress in the acquisition of language skills. The children's good achievement over time is a direct result of the consistent, enriched education provided by the teachers and their classroom assistants.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.2 (17.5)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	15.5 (15.6)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	16.9 (16.9)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 59 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. The pupils continue to make good progress in the infant classes, particularly in the development of their literacy skills. In the 2003 national tests, the pupils' performance in the reading tests was well above the national average and above those of pupils in similar schools. In lessons, standards in speaking and listening are above average for their age. Most pupils listen carefully and speak clearly. This is because from an early age, the children are encouraged to work in groups and to discuss their work. Furthermore, the teachers set a good example in helping the children to appreciate the richness of language through the range of stories that they tell and through the quality of the experiences that they provide. This strategy

strongly supports the pupils' achievement in reading and writing. The systematic teaching of reading, the broad range of opportunities for the pupils to write and the strong links with the parents enhance the pupils' performance.

3. The pupils' achievements are very good in the junior classes, because of the quality of teaching, particularly in Years 5 and 6, and the strength of the curriculum that places such high value on the personal development of the children. In the 2003 national tests for Year 6, the pupils' results were well above the national average and were well above the performance of pupils in similar schools in terms of the progress made since Year 2. The school often exceeds the challenging targets it sets for its pupils. Current standards in English, mathematics and science are well above average. The pupils have a very clear understanding of what they need to do to improve and work hard to meet the targets set for them. The setting of pupils in Year 6 for mathematics has a beneficial impact on the pupils' learning as they respond well to the smaller group sizes and the very good teaching. The pupils' literacy skills are well developed because they are encouraged to use their skills in a wide range of different contexts across the curriculum.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.1 (30.8)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	28.8 (29.6)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	30.6 (30.4)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 66 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

4. Beyond the core subjects, standards in information and communication technology are above average in Year 6. This represents a significant achievement for the school as standards were judged to be unsatisfactory at the time of the last inspection. Standards in music are above average in Year 6 because the pupils have the benefit of the specialist expertise of the same teacher as they progress through the school. Furthermore, the curriculum strongly supports singing. Standards in art and design and design and technology have improved since the last inspection and are now satisfactory.
5. The pupils achieve satisfactorily in physical education because a full range of skills is covered in spite of parental concerns about the school's lack of a playing field. Standards in music, history and geography are good.
6. In all year groups, pupils with special educational needs (SEN) achieve very well because the provision is very well managed. At a very early stage the staff make a point of identifying those pupils who find it hard to learn. They analyse the performance of these pupils and prepare high quality Individual Education Plans that set out clear targets for pupils. One clear indication of the effectiveness of the school's provision is the significant number of pupils who are taken off the school's special needs register every year. Those pupils who are learning English as an additional language respond very well to the individual attention that they receive and are enabled to access the full curriculum. Higher-attaining pupils respond very well to the challenge set for them, particularly in Years 5 and 6, and achieve very well. There is no significant variation between the achievements of boys and girls.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Attendance levels are very good. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. The school's provision for pupils' personal development is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attendance and punctuality are very good, with pupils keen to come to school.
- The behaviour of pupils in class and around the school is very good.
- Pupils are keen to take on the responsibilities offered by the school.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good, founded on the school's Christian ethos.

Commentary

7. The pupils are proud of their school and enjoy attending. School plays an important part in pupils' lives. For example, they are very positive about their teachers, whom they justifiably hold in very high regard. The pupils' attitudes to school and their work are very good. Nearly all pupils listen well to the views of others, co-operate fully and are responsible. They are polite and friendly and respond well to teachers' high expectations.
8. Behaviour is very good throughout the school, in lessons, assemblies and playtimes. Expectations of behaviour are high and the vast majority of pupils live up to this. There is an effective recognised system of rewards and sanctions. Pupils are constantly taught right from wrong around the school and in lessons called "Circle time" where the children are encouraged to share their feelings. There were two fixed term exclusions in the year prior to the inspection and the school has taken very effective action to support the pupil involved.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	336	2	0
White – any other background	51	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	6	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	9	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	18	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	6	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	1	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	2	0	0

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

9. Pupils are keen to take on responsibilities around the school. They meet regularly with the deputy headteacher and other staff to discuss matters raised by their classes. Year 6 and Year 2 pupils act as "buddies" in the junior and infant playgrounds to befriend children who have nobody to play with and to mediate when disagreements occur. Others undertake a variety of duties around the school. A good example of this was given by two pupils who

explained that their responsibility was to check that children entering the school during playtime had passes issued by a teacher. Pupils are confident and parents recognise that the school encourages their children to become mature and independent.

10. The spiritual, moral and social development of the pupils is very good overall. The school's ethos is founded on the Catholic faith and this strongly supports the pupils' personal development. The work of the school with the local Catholic parish not only provides spiritual development for pupils but also helps them develop the skills required in a wider community. It is anticipated that most children in the Reception classes will achieve the Early Learning Goals in their personal and social development. Pupils are introduced to other religions and cultures in religious education lessons and through art and music. The school makes the most of opportunities to raise the pupils' awareness of other cultures. For example, the school arranged for pupils to visit a local secondary school that was running a project on Jewish life and culture, and a recent visitor to the school talked to them about the traditions of Islam. However, the school recognises that more should be done to ensure that the celebration of traditions other than those of Western Europe is more deeply embedded in the work of the school.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	3.8	School data	0.3
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

11. Attendance and punctuality are both very good, with children keen to come to school and arrive on time. As a result, classes start promptly. Registers are taken in each class and any lateness or absence noted and quickly acted upon.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is very good. The curriculum is good and the school provides a very good standard of care for its pupils. The work set is very well modified for different groups of pupils so that they apply themselves well and try hard.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching in Years 5 and 6 is very good.
- Assessment procedures are used very effectively to help the pupils to learn.
- Literacy and numeracy are very well taught.
- The school is successful in ensuring that those pupils with special educational needs and those that are learning English as an additional language achieve well.
- The school makes very good use of teaching assistants in helping the children to learn.

Commentary

12. The inspection took place at the very beginning of the new school year and consequently the teachers were very committed to establishing routines with their new classes. However, it is clear that the school has successfully eliminated the small pockets of unsatisfactory teaching reported at the time of the last inspection. Almost all of the very good teaching was observed in Years 5 and 6.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 45 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0 %)	10 (22%)	19 (42%)	16 (36%)	0 (0 %)	0 (0 %)	0 (0 %)

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.

13. Very good attention is paid to the pupils' previous attainment when planning work in literacy and numeracy. This ensures that these lessons run smoothly. There is an appropriate variation in the work set for the range of ability and for the age range in each class. The feedback to pupils is good and in the best examples, particularly in Years 5 and 6, the pupils are clearly informed about what they need to do to improve their work. In mathematics lessons, the rigorous use of assessment information and the high quality feedback to pupils enable work to be set at the appropriate level to enable all pupils to succeed. This is particularly evident in Year 6, where further refinement to the use of assessment brings the introduction of a third teaching group for numeracy lessons.
14. Furthermore, in literacy and numeracy lessons the teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and manage the behaviour of the pupils well. This enables lessons to progress at a good pace. In Years 1 and 2, the teachers are very thorough in their teaching of early reading, writing and mathematical skills. This lays a very secure foundation for the pupils' further learning. Where the teaching was very good, for example in Year 6 lessons about writing play scripts based on Greek legends, the teachers' enthusiasm for the subject, combined with very good questioning skills, led to very good progress. Many of the pupils in Year 6 are already working at a secure Level 4.
15. A particular strength of the teaching is the way that the teachers help the pupils to develop their vocabulary and language skills. Many lessons begin with very lively question and answer sessions that build on what the pupils know from a previous lesson or unit of work. For example, in a literacy lesson for the pupils in Year 5, the teacher efficiently and effectively enabled the pupils to consider their ideas for a further episode in the story of "Blabbermouth". Furthermore, from the Reception class onwards, teachers expect the pupils to convey their ideas on paper. This means that the pupils experience a good range of opportunities to practise their writing in different subjects and this develops both their confidence and their expertise. Homework is used very well throughout the school, particularly to help the pupils to develop their skills of literacy.
16. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs and those pupils who are learning English as an additional language is very good. Pupils are supported very well within classrooms by class teachers and a hard-working and effective team of teaching assistants. Class teachers ensure in their lesson plans that appropriate provision is made for pupils with particular learning needs, such as those learning English as an additional language. Teaching assistants work very well with class teachers and provide good and frequently very good support for pupils, monitoring pupils' progress during the lesson and providing a good blend of help and challenge. Support for pupils with Statements of Special Educational Needs is very good.

17. Classroom assistants make a very positive contribution to the pupils' learning in both of the computer suites. A successful element of the classroom practice is the way that information and communication technology is increasingly used to support learning. Staff expertise has developed as the result of intensive training since the last inspection. Both of the very well equipped suites are used effectively, not only to develop the pupils' desktop skills but also to extend their learning in other subjects. For example, in a successful Year 1 lesson, the pupils not only refined their skills at clicking and dragging icons on screen but also matched descriptors of different mathematical shapes to the shapes themselves. In the Foundation Stage, the staff work as an effective team and children are introduced sensitively but thoroughly to good social conduct. Both teachers and teaching assistants take time to talk to children and use praise well to raise children's self-esteem. They deal with the children in a sensitive manner and make a major contribution to establishing routines and enabling the children to feel secure.

The curriculum

Curriculum provision is good and meets all statutory requirements.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum enables pupils to achieve well and promotes high standards.
- The school makes good provision for extra-curricular activities.
- The curriculum is promoted through a partnership of school, parents and the community.
- ICT is used effectively to support learning.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.

Commentary

18. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum which is enriched through a wide range of extra-curricular activities. There is very good coverage of all subjects and planning ensures that knowledge and skills are built on as pupils move through the school. Planning ensures that there is parity of provision in parallel classes and all pupils are enabled to achieve well, particularly in English and mathematics. All subjects undergo a regular review process in which the content and approach to teaching are constantly refined. This process is supported by regular staff training.
19. The planning for some subjects, particularly art and design and design and technology, is largely based on government guidelines and the school has been relatively slow in developing a curriculum which is unique to its own circumstances and pupils. Recent initiatives are leading to a more relevant and creative curriculum in which links are made between subjects but this is still in its early stages. Good use is made of specialist teaching, particularly in music and in other subject areas such as information and communication technology in Years 3 to 6. In addition to the day-to-day planned cross-curricular links the school regularly holds *Celebration Weeks*, during which the whole week tends to be cross-curricular with a focus on a different subject such as art or music.
20. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good overall, which is a similar judgement to that of the last inspection team. The pupils are identified at a very early stage. A suitable programme of learning is planned and the work set is very well matched to the pupils' needs. The specialist expertise of outside agencies is called in and used if necessary. Reviews, both formal and informal, are regularly held to check that the pupils are making sufficient progress. The school works very hard to give all its pupils equal access to the full curriculum. Teaching assistants are very closely involved in the planning and are fully engaged in each lesson.
21. A wide range of out of school activities is provided, with a good variety of sporting opportunities throughout the year. These are very well attended. Pupils go on a number of regular visits to support and extend classroom learning. Good use is made of the local area and there is a residential visit further afield for Year 6 pupils. The local community, including the church and a large number of visitors, makes a vital contribution to the life of the school. The school makes it very clear to parents what is being taught and through homework projects promotes a fruitful partnership between home and school.
22. Information and communication technology is used effectively to support learning across the curriculum. Teachers are confident in using a wide range of technology; opportunities are built into teachers' planning and seamlessly integrated into lessons. This is important in maintaining pupils' interest and motivation. Learning resources are good and used well.

Care, guidance and support

The provision of care, welfare, health and safety is very good. The school provides very good support, advice and guidance. The involvement of pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has a caring family ethos.
- The arrangements for the induction of pupils are very good.
- Pupils are very well involved in making decisions about the school through the school council.
- Pupils have very good relationships with each other and with staff.

Commentary

23. The school provides a safe and secure environment based on regular health and safety checks. There are good systems for risk assessment of both the school itself and external visits. School buildings are very well maintained, clean and tidy. Effective child protection procedures are in place and all staff have recently undergone training. The school maintains records of any accidents and first-aid arrangements are in place. There are detailed records of pupils' medical backgrounds and suitable arrangements have been made for the control and distribution of medicines.
24. Many parents commend the school for its family atmosphere and, as a result, their children are happy there. In the questionnaire a minority felt that their child might be harassed or bullied, particularly at playtimes. As a result, the school has responded quickly by introducing a system of playground 'buddies' and a friendship seat where children without someone to play with can go. During the inspection the new system was working well with the 'buddies' clearly identified by their caps and a number of children happy to be using the facility. Relationships between pupils and with staff are very good. Pupils are very well known to staff members and individual teachers keep records of their personal development. Academic assessment is also very good and, as a result, pupils receive very good support and guidance.
25. Induction methods are very good, a fact recognised by parents in the questionnaire. For the majority entering the school in the Reception class there are three visits to the school to familiarise the children with their new surroundings. Parents are fully briefed by teachers and other staff and a home visit is made by the class teacher and teaching assistant. Arrangements for pupils entering the school at other times are adapted to the circumstances.
26. A pupil survey is carried out every two years to canvass the pupils' views. There is a very active school council with two representatives for each year, who are elected by their class. In the main corridor a large notice-board is used to display photographs of the school councillors and give information such as dates of meetings and the next agenda. Information is fed back to other pupils via this board, announcements in assemblies and class briefings by council members. During the inspection the first meeting of the year saw the election of the council's officers and formal discussion of matters from the previous year. All members learnt the operation of committees, with staff explaining the system to new members. Meetings are attended by the deputy headteacher, other staff and a school governor, thus emphasising their importance.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The partnership with parents, other schools and colleges and the community is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are excellent arrangements with the local Catholic secondary school for the successful transfer of pupils.
- Parents hold the school in high regard and the parent-school partnership greatly benefits pupils' learning.
- There are very strong links with the Catholic parish.
- Pupils benefit from the school's very good links with other local primary schools.

Commentary

27. The school has very strong links with parents. Virtually all believe that their children are happy at school. One parent spoken to during the inspection had moved to the locality because of the school. Others, who had moved to the area from other countries, felt part of the church and school community. They particularly appreciate the family atmosphere created by the staff and the ease with which they can contact teachers to discuss any matters of concern. As a result, any concerns are quickly and effectively dealt with. This informal contact is backed up with a parent survey every two years. There is an active parent-teacher association, which raises significant funds for the school and provides support for school social activities.
28. Overall, parents receive good information. There are satisfactory annual reports to parents, which provide a good deal of information about pupils' progress and future targets. Regular newsletters keep parents well informed of school activities. There is a very helpful web-site, which provides a wide variety of information and is regularly updated to include any letters sent to parents in the previous month. Termly curriculum letters inform parents about the topics their children will be covering in lessons and thus enable parents to actively support their children's learning in school and through homework.
29. The school is firmly established as part of the local Catholic parish and pupils gain from this involvement in a wider community. Pupils regularly take part in services in the church and parishioners are invited to attend services in school. Fund-raising and social events are publicised through both the school and parish newsletters. The school organised a community week when representatives of local organisations, such as the fire brigade, local newspaper and environmental health department, visited the school to speak to pupils about their occupations.
30. There are very strong links with the other Catholic schools in the area. Almost all the pupils go on to the local Catholic secondary school and, as a result, the schools work very closely together to ensure that pupils' education is uninterrupted by the transfer. Teachers from the secondary school take classes in the primary school. Social events such as five-a-side football and drama days enhance the excellent transfer process. Children with special educational needs are particularly well catered for with additional arrangements including separate visits to the secondary school.
31. Neighbouring Catholic primary schools work very well together to exchange knowledge and develop policies. For example, the headteacher acts as a mentor for other newly appointed headteachers and is on the steering group of the Community Arts Project. The school is involved in the Primary Catholic Partnership, which trains Catholic teachers, one of whom has joined the staff.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management provided by the headteacher and senior staff are very good. The governing body provides very good support for the work of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school's commitment to inclusion, equality and concern for the needs of individuals is very good.
- The leadership provided by the headteacher is very good.
- The strength of the teamwork is a major factor in helping the pupils to achieve.
- The senior leadership team has a clear focus on ensuring that the curriculum provides an enhanced range of learning experiences for the pupils.
- The governing body provides very good support.

Commentary

32. The school benefits from very good leadership from the headteacher, a dedicated and enthusiastic staff and a supportive governing body. The headteacher, who has high expectations for the school, has forged a very good working partnership with his deputy who shares his commitment to ensuring that the working environment reflects these aspirations. The strength of the teamwork, where all members are valued, is a key feature of the school and was recognised in the recent award of "Investor in People". The governors and staff work with shared purpose and are committed to the aims of the school and to high standards of personal and academic achievement. The school improvement plan, determined through consultation between staff and governors, recognises that much has been achieved in developing assessment procedures and developing the effectiveness of the teaching team. The current plan clearly defines future initiatives with an emphasis on curriculum enrichment to further develop the creative and aesthetic opportunities for the pupils. Financial resources are fully utilised to ensure the school makes good progress towards its priorities.
33. The ethos of the school is very good. The school is very successful in meeting its aims. There is a positive, caring ethos, that reflects its Catholic foundation and which promotes high standards of academic attainment and personal development. Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds are happy in school and share its values. This is reflected in their work and their relationships with peers and adults. There is a strong team spirit that is based on a commitment to sharing professional expertise to ensure that the children achieve their best. Subject leaders have established an atmosphere that encourages an open discussion of effective classroom practice. This, together with the more formal programme of monitoring of teaching and learning, continues to improve the quality of teaching. Although many of the subject and phase leaders have been allocated new responsibilities, they are rising to the challenge of increased responsibility and accountability. Their confidence in taking the initiative and in developing their expertise has made a significant contribution to the improvement in standards.
34. The school has successfully improved those areas of weakness identified in the last inspection. It has increased its information and communication technology capability significantly and standards are above average in Year 6. The potential of information and communication technology to support the curriculum is being continually developed and the class-based interactive whiteboards and the computer suites are being used both imaginatively and effectively. The school has been particularly successful in continuing to raise standards in English, mathematics and science. Standards in Year 6 in these subjects are well above average. This is because the school has made significant progress in developing its marking and assessment procedures and because the quality of teaching is good. There are no longer pockets of unsatisfactory teaching. The accommodation has benefited from several building initiatives since the last inspection.

35. The leadership and management of special educational needs within the school is very good: the school's special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) is a very experienced practitioner with a very good overview of special educational needs provision in the school and extensive contacts with useful outside agencies when required. Detailed and up-to-date records are maintained and Individual Education Plans and Statements are reviewed regularly and appropriately with the full involvement of parents. Pupils with special educational needs are successfully integrated into every aspect of the school's life.
36. The governing body is very supportive of the headteacher and the school. The committee structure is well established and the governing body fulfils its statutory duties. Its role as a critical friend to the school is well developed because the governors have a very clear understanding of the curriculum and the standards achieved as well as pastoral, staffing and premises issues. For example, the special educational needs governor has a termly meeting with the co-ordinator to discuss the progress of pupils on the register and any barriers to learning. The governors make a significant contribution to the strategic planning of the school, for example by discussing on a regular basis progress towards the objectives in the school improvement plan.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	1,048,523	Balance from previous year	57,531
Total expenditure	1,072,763	Balance carried forward to the next	33,291
Expenditure per pupil	2,489		

37. The office and administrative staff provide a welcoming first point of contact and a very efficient service. The day-to-day financial management of the school is very good. This is the result of the effective partnership between the local education authority and the school to establish financial systems that are relevant and effective. The strategic use of finance is very good. The school is very successful at securing additional finance and ensures that specific grants, for information and communication technology and special educational needs for example, are correctly spent. All expenditure is carefully tracked in line with best value principles and the budget is updated continuously to show the current state of the school's finances. The school provides very good value for money.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for Reception children is **good**. Children enter one of two Reception classes in the September before they are five and at the time of inspection were attending part-time. Most children had attended school for only four sessions prior to the inspection but had visited school last term on two occasions. Most children have had some form of pre school-education and enter school with average levels of attainment. Assessment records for the previous year show that children achieve well and are well on track to reaching or exceeding the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning. Given the short time in school for the children, no judgement is made on achievement but progress in all areas of learning is good.

Since the last inspection the quality of teaching has improved. Accommodation inside the school for Reception children is mainly good and the outdoor area has been substantially improved and imaginatively extended. However, one Reception class does have constraints in space and this limits the full range of possibilities for extended role-play. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are good and staff are continually reviewing how planning and practice can be improved.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Mains strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have high expectations of good social behaviour and maintain good relationships with children.
- Children make good progress in social and independence skills.
- Good teamwork ensures strong support for children who need direction.
- Good relationships between staff and parents support the children's learning.

Commentary

38. As a result of home and prior school visits, children are happy and confident in their first weeks in school. They readily hang up their coats and join with others in activities prepared for them. Good relationships between teachers and children are soon established and children quickly begin to know what is expected of them and the majority behave well. A small minority of lively individuals is managed effectively by all staff and before long children begin to share and take turns with good adult support.
39. The staff work as an effective team and children are introduced sensitively but thoroughly to good social conduct. Both teachers and teaching assistants take time to talk to children and use praise to raise children's self-esteem. They are always on hand to guide children on appropriate personal hygiene procedures, which most children can achieve independently. When appropriate, children can dress and undress for lessons with very little help. They have already been taught to fold their clothes with care. The children are ready to sit and listen on request and to answer to their names at registration times.
40. Children are keen to explore the activities set out for them and readily join others in the home corner to work and play with the resources prepared for them, for example the jungle arranged in the sandpit. Daily worship deepens children's understanding of their own culture and beliefs and they begin to develop an understanding of how their words and actions affect the feelings of others.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and linked to assessment opportunities for this area of learning.
- Teachers use good questioning skills to develop the children's speaking and listening.
- Activities are well prepared to encourage children to write.
- Parents are well informed of what children will learn.

Commentary

41. Children progress well in this area of learning. Topics and story lines are visited regularly to provide opportunities for children's literacy skills to increase. An imaginatively developed topic on the theme of a "dinosaur visit" to the classroom provided an exciting stimulus for the children. They listened well to the teacher's description of the dinosaur and were keen to ask questions about his footprints around the classroom. Curiosity was further aroused when they explored the letter he left behind; the teacher used this effectively to assess how many children understood what a letter was and where to begin reading it. Most of the children made good progress in using new vocabulary such as 'opposite' 'envelope', 'address'. Equally, when listening to the story of the baby dinosaur they were totally absorbed in the story telling. Teachers use circle time and daily worship well to encourage children to talk about themselves and their feelings. Sitting around a candle, children were taught the importance of prayer and giving thanks by having the opportunity to talk about what makes them happy.
42. Children quickly learn to settle quietly and listen attentively to their teacher. They ask questions and, although not all are ready to share their reading books with adults confidently, those who do can name a number of sounds they see in their book. A large proportion of children can recognise their name. Most are happy to make marks in the writing corner and most copy the sound of the week confidently.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have a variety of opportunities to practise numeracy and in games and songs as well as in lessons.
- All activities are thoroughly planned.
- Teaching assistants make substantial contributions to the children's mathematical development.

Commentary

43. Teachers create opportunities to include counting and number recognition in all Reception activities whenever possible and the children make good progress. Many children enter the Reception classes able to count up to 20 but few understand the value of numbers. Therefore, counting and ordering numbers is approached carefully at this stage in the term. The higher-attaining children recognise numbers such as 8, 13, and 15 and check their accuracy on the number card but they are not yet able to write the numbers correctly. Inevitably pace is sometimes slow. The teaching assistants support the children's learning well; they make notes on children's performance as they work with them and plan activities with teachers. Staff incorporate songs and rhymes to support children's understanding and use sand and water play to reinforce learning.

44. Mathematical development also takes place outdoors. The teaching assistants continue with activities such as ordering numbers in the playground, using resources encountered in the classroom as well as the water play facility in the garden. This is set up daily by Year 6 pupils, who plan different water pathways with the equipment provided.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers make good links with other areas of learning.
- Activities are imaginatively chosen.
- A good start has been made with information and communication technology (ICT) .
- Parents and volunteer helpers make a good contribution to children's learning.

Commentary

45. At this stage of the year the school rightly gives high priority to this area of learning. Teachers choose imaginative topics, which connect with all areas of learning, and consequently children make good progress, including those for whom English is an additional language and those with special educational needs. The story of Dino the dinosaur presented many opportunities to explore the school and to ask questions, for example about how he could fit into the classroom and which direction he took around the school. Following his footprints around the school was exciting for the children as well as helping them to become familiar with the building. Key words such as, "on", "across", "under", "left", "right" led to good understanding for all especially those children for whom English is an additional language. The mystery of the dinosaur deepened further when the secretary came to talk to the children about how the dinosaur had come through a window which was broken and this had to be repaired that day. Children increase their knowledge through well-planned visits to see tradesmen such as builders and joiners. People who serve the community regularly visit school. In the topic 'Myself' children become familiar with their teachers' families and explore their place in their own family. Their curiosity and interest is aroused when looking at the toys with which grandparents played.
46. Children visit the computer suite weekly and are assisted by volunteer parents. They are trained to log in and use a numerical password and already are confident in using the mouse.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strength and weaknesses

- Teachers' planning and management skills are very good.
- Children prepare for lessons well.
- Children are keen to perform well.
- Children make good progress in manipulative skills.

Commentary

47. Given their short time in school, children change for lessons in the hall very well and are very well behaved. This is mainly due to the good management by the teacher. In a very good lesson the well-planned activities encouraged confidence and interest. On apparatus, this confidence was used well as children tried many different ways to move along it. Most children

were well engaged on tasks and clearly reached expected levels. Aspects of this lesson contributed very well to children's personal and social development. The teacher's encouragement contributed markedly to children's desire to demonstrate and perform well. The children's use of small tools and markers is progressing well and this contributes significantly to their control in making marks on the whiteboards in literacy activities and in creative development.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality and range and of the resources used make a strong contribution to the development of the children's creative skills.
- There are diverse opportunities for role-play.
- Activities linked with other areas of learning increase children's creative skills

Commentary

48. Teachers include a wide range of interesting creative activities in which children can work with colour texture, shape and music. Songs and rhymes are specifically chosen to match the learning points in planned activities. Similarly home corners and small world areas are planned to links with situations in stories, such as a forest area for 'The Tiger who came to tea'. Despite the constraints of the accommodation these are imaginatively laid out. As a result children become immersed in role-play and their imaginative skills, as well as their oracy skills, develop well. Whilst they were manipulating clay to make dinosaurs there was interesting talk between children and teaching assistants on the size of dinosaurs and the number of spines they would include on their model. Children were very absorbed in the marbling effects on the template on their dinosaurs, made with oily inks and water, and could guess why the ink floated and settled on the floating template.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

The overall quality of provision for English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are very good overall.
- The good and, particularly in Years 5 and 6, the very good quality of teaching supports high achievement.
- The very good management of the subject by the co-ordinator has ensured that standards continue to rise.
- Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported.

Commentary

49. Standards of achievement in reading are above national expectations by the age of seven and are well-above national expectations by the age of 11. Standards in writing are above national expectations at Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils enter the school with broadly average English skills and they make very good progress as they move through the school, with the result that, in the latest (2004) national tests, overall attainment in English was above national expectations by the end of the Infants and was well above national expectations by the end of Year 6, with well

over half of the pupils achieving Level 5 in reading. This is a pattern of success that has been consistent over the previous few years.

50. Teaching in English ranges from satisfactory to very good and lesson observations, coupled with a scrutiny of pupils' work from the current and previous school year, indicate that teaching is good overall throughout the school. Teaching is particularly good in the four upper junior classes and accounts for the high achievement of most pupils in Years 5 and 6. Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and have good classroom- and behaviour-management skills. These allow most lessons to progress at a good pace. Teachers use day-to-day assessment very well to match tasks to pupils' abilities and learning needs. Where teaching and pupils' progress are very good, the teachers' enthusiasm for the subject, their impressive rapport with the pupils and comprehensive subject knowledge, combined with well-developed questioning skills and the setting and maintenance of a very good pace throughout, are common features of the lesson. This was evident, for example, in a Year 6 lesson where the teacher's effective use of humour, thorough planning, and very high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour led to high levels of motivation and, hence, very good progress.
51. Pupils with special educational needs are very well included in lessons and are well-supported, both inside and outside lessons, by the SENCO and learning support assistants. A very good range of additional strategies is employed to support younger pupils having difficulties with reading and phonics and, since a significant number of pupils placed on the special educational needs register for "literacy needs" are removed from the register each year, these strategies are clearly having a positive effect.
52. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour in lessons are very good in the upper junior classes and this strongly supports learning. In the best cases, pupils work enthusiastically together, respond very well and confidently to their teacher's questions and work independently without the need for frequent teacher-intervention.
53. The subject leader provides very good leadership. Despite the school's success in the subject, the leadership is not complacent. A good range of in-service training has been provided for staff, including training on the use of 'genres' in literacy, on 'grammar for writing' and on guided reading strategies. Further initiatives are planned to investigate ways of further narrowing the gap between attainment in reading and writing and ways of further motivating boys to read. Very good "child-friendly" systems for assessment fully involve the pupils and ensure the pupils have a good understanding of what they need to do to improve. Equally, home-school links ensure that parents are involved with teaching their children to read; for example, younger children take books home each night in their book bag, for example and regular homework is set throughout the school. A whole-school handwriting style is taught systematically and this has a positive effect on the presentation of pupils' work. Weekly spelling tests encourage pupils to take care with their spellings and a range of additional activities, such as, for example, visits from an author, an illustrator and a story-teller, a 'Book Fair', library visits etc. all contribute to pupils' love of books and enthusiasm for the subject.
54. Resources for the subject are good. A new "reading scheme" has recently been purchased for the Infants and there are plans to purchase new reading-scheme materials for the Juniors, with a focus on classic texts and 'boy-friendly' texts. Class libraries are well stocked and the two school libraries are well managed, with the junior library running a bar-coded computerised system.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

55. There are very well planned opportunities for the cross-curricular use of English skills, so that, for example, a significant amount of English work is undertaken in history and geography lessons. The high standards obtained in English have a positive effect on the standards achieved in these subjects. For example, good use is made of the pupils' knowledge of Greek legends to encourage the writing of play scripts involving Greek gods and mythical

figures. Teachers make good use of information and communication technology in literacy lessons; in the best cases, teachers use the school's new "interactive boards" very effectively, accessing Internet resources during lessons.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good standards overall have been maintained since the last inspection.
- The quality of teaching is consistently good.
- Pupils are ready to learn and apply themselves well to their tasks.
- Very good use is made of assessment and monitoring systems.
- The subject is very well led.

Commentary

56. Standards in mathematics in Year 2 are above average and those in Year 6 are well above average. Overall achievement is very good. In the national tests for 2004 ninety-three per cent of seven-year-olds reached expected levels. Levels for higher-attaining pupils were lower than the previous year owing to there being more pupils with special educational needs. However, there was a significant increase in the success of the lower-attaining pupils. Much of this good achievement is the result of very careful monitoring of pupils' performance at senior management level and the teachers' review of work covered.
57. The quality of teaching is good overall. Teachers are careful in their planning to cover a good level of skills and a wide range of investigations which will challenge and interest pupils. Pupils are often working at levels above the national average across the school. As the provision for special educational needs and support for learning is very good, pupils of all abilities achieve equally well.
58. In Year 2, the pupils' calculating skills are well advanced and their work shows a high level of confidence in the recording of their calculations. Both infant and junior pupils use personal whiteboards very effectively to work out solutions and the interactive whiteboard in each classroom is used imaginatively to show pupils a variety of ways to calculate and to demonstrate how they have achieved a result. Equally, teachers use simple resources to increase pupils' understanding. In a good lesson in Year 1, effective use was made of a 'feely' bag of shapes to reinforce the pupils' understanding of the properties of two and three-dimensional shapes. The lesson started with a song to encourage the class to guess the shape from the number of sides and corners described. Each child had to choose an extra "property" to help its group identify the chosen shape. Pupils applied their shape knowledge with confidence and used the correct vocabulary very well. Much of their success was due to the teacher's imaginative use of available resources.
59. Teachers are successful in motivating the pupils to learn. Introductions to lessons are often brisk and stimulating; pupils are keen to calculate and problem solve quickly and effectively. Mathematics is described by older pupils as a favourite subject because "It is fun!" Occasionally there is a slowness of pace but at this stage of the academic year teachers are preparing pupils in new routines and encouraging good learning behaviours. Pupils appreciate the support they receive and quickly become confident in working with new ideas.
60. During lessons, the teachers continually check that pupils have succeeded in their tasks. This is particularly evident in Years 5 and 6 where very good teaching was observed. Consequently, pupils' work rate is good and pupils feel secure when learning new

mathematical ideas. They become excited when they realise they can use known methods of working to work out solutions to the problems set. Teachers ask, "What strategy will you use?" and encourage pupils to work against the clock. Good explanations from teachers in small groups encourage pupils to exclaim, "I've got it!"

61. Teachers assess pupils' work thoroughly, checking their aptitude regularly in order that the appropriate level of support can be given to ensure success. Results are rigorously analysed so that individual targets can be set and teaching groups can be organised systematically. They regularly review their practice and make improvements in their teaching. As a result, pupils are very clear about what they have to do to improve.
62. Overall there is good attention to the maintenance of high standards and the subject has a lively profile across the school. Much of this is due to the subject leader's very clear view of the priorities for the subject and the way in which the staff are motivated. She is very active in getting the subject off the ground and is particularly well supported by senior staff who make a significant contribution to the teaching in Year 6.

Mathematics across the curriculum

63. Mathematics is often used in other subjects to practise and reinforce skills. For example, weighing and measuring occur regularly in science. Pupils use surveys and plot coordinates in geography as well as working out codes and number systems in history. The use of the information and communication technology facilities is developing well. Connections with other parts of the curriculum feature most significantly in *Celebration Weeks*, where subject leaders plan for the mathematics to feature purposefully in their own subject. Year 6 found this aspect one of the most memorable aspects of the subject.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject is very well led and managed.
- Standards are above average by Year 2 and well above average by Year 6.
- There is very good coverage of the key skills and concepts.
- In some classes there are missed opportunities for the pupils' own investigative work.

Commentary

64. Standards in science have been consistently maintained at the high levels noted at the time of the previous inspection. Despite several changes in leadership the subject has maintained a high profile and pupils achieve well across the school. Attainment is above average by the end of Year 2 and well above average by the end of Year 6.
65. The current leadership and management of the subject are very good. The co-ordinator is well organised, has a clear understanding of teaching and learning throughout the school and is constantly seeking to refine what is already good practice. Pupils' progress is tracked very thoroughly and assessment is also used to identify emerging whole-school areas for development. A recent and ongoing focus has been on the development of scientific language.
66. There is very good coverage of the curriculum and the scrutiny of pupils' work shows that skills and knowledge are built on progressively as pupils move through the school. End of unit evaluation sheets indicate where reinforcement is needed when topics are revisited. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to carry out investigations but these are in the main highly structured and there are relatively few opportunities for independent investigative work,

for pupils to plan their own experiments and devise their own ways for recording results. As pupils of all abilities often complete similar tasks, there are missed opportunities for extending higher-attaining pupils with tasks which are qualitatively different in challenge.

67. The quality of teaching is good overall. Lessons are carefully planned and prepared and resources are used well. Year groups plan together ensuring broad parity of provision in parallel classes. The very good relationships between adults and pupils and between the pupils themselves underpin the effective learning in most lessons. Information and communication technology is used very effectively to support learning. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and prompt discussion through good open-ended questioning. Pupils have positive attitudes to science, take a pride in their work and are keen to do well. The involvement of parents through regular homework projects makes a valuable contribution to pupils' learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Because of effective leadership, the provision has improved significantly since the last inspection.
- The pupils are making good progress.
- The school makes good use of information and communication technology to support learning across the curriculum.
- The staff have a good level of expertise and are keen to make the most of new innovations.
- Assessment procedures are at an early stage of development.

Commentary

68. Standards in Years 2 are in line with the levels expected and they are above in Year 6. The pupils make good progress because lesson plans are detailed and well focused upon the developing pupils' skills. The school's commitment to training all staff has led to increased confidence and a willingness to use information and communication technology to support learning across the curriculum. The school's computer suites are timetabled regularly for each year group to ensure that the basic skills are taught systematically and this is working well. Pupils with special educational needs and those who are learning English as an additional language are very well supported.
69. The quality of teaching is good overall. The development of the teachers' expertise and knowledge in this subject has been well managed and this has enabled the new resources to be used to good effect. For example, the staff make effective use of the interactive whiteboards installed in every classroom. The computer suites are carefully timetabled to enable pupils to have regular access to computers. This enables all of the necessary skills to be taught systematically. In one good lesson, on multi-media presentations, the teacher had high expectations of the work the pupils were going to produce. He gave clear guidance on the downloading of animated sequences to include in the pupils' presentations, so that the pupils were clear about the aims of the lesson. The teacher's explanations and instructions were clear, and when the pupils found difficulties with the process these were dealt with quickly. This meant that the pupils were kept busy and involved in their work. These factors, together with the quality of the relationships, which enabled the pupils to feel comfortable about sharing their mistakes, created a successful positive learning environment.
70. The school has a good number of computers for the number of pupils and most other resources are readily available. Although simple assessment procedures have been introduced to provide staff with clear information about each pupil's progress, the subject leader recognises that more use could be made of the data to pitch the work set more

accurately for the different ability levels in each class. There is a clear and appropriate vision of how standards in ICT should be raised and how its use in other subjects will be achieved. The improvement made since the last inspection has been excellent.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

71. The school is making good use of information and communication technology to support learning across the curriculum. For example, the youngest pupils use computer programs to sort and classify two-dimensional shapes. Both literacy and numeracy lessons are conducted in the computer suites on a regular basis to enable the pupils to process their work. Older pupils research information to support their science and geography projects. Throughout the school, good use is made of digital photography to record special events.

HUMANITIES

72. It was only possible to observe a limited number of **geography** lessons during the inspection. As a result, no secure judgments can be made on the quality of provision or teaching or on overall standards in the subjects. However, in the one geography lesson observed, a Year 2 lesson where the pupils were learning about different kinds of landscape, the quality of teaching was satisfactory.
73. The curriculum for the subject is good. A government-recommended scheme of work is in place which provides the basic core curriculum and ensures continuity and progression in key skills as pupils move through the school. A good range of fieldwork activities is organised for pupils throughout the year and these enhance the curriculum very effectively. A particularly noteworthy feature of the curriculum are the very good cross-curricular links with other subjects, so that, for example, a significant amount of English work is undertaken in geography lessons and vice-versa. There are other strong and effective cross-curricular links with studies in mathematics, information and communication technology and history.
74. Subject-leadership is good: the leader has developed a good overview and has introduced an effective whole-school system of “end of unit” assessments.

HISTORY

The school’s provision for history is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching is good.
- The subject is well led and managed.

Commentary

75. Based solely on a scrutiny of pupils’ work, standards are above average at the end of Years 2 and 6 and the pupils achieve well. Three lessons were observed during the inspection, and these were all in the junior department. The quality of teaching in these lessons ranged from good to very good and was good overall. In the best lessons, teachers have very high expectations of pupils’ work and behaviour and, as a result, pupils apply themselves to their work with enthusiasm. This was seen, for example, in a Year 6 lesson where pupils were exploring the origin of theatre and drama in the ancient Greek civilisation. The teacher’s very good relationships with the pupils, (particularly notable because of the very early stage of the school year), her evident enthusiasm for the subject and very good classroom management and questioning skills led to pupils responding confidently and responsibly. As the lesson progressed, the very good pace and the use of a good range of relevant resources, including those for information and communication technology, led to good progress in learning. This

lesson and its contents were closely interwoven with the week's literacy topic – pupils were writing play scripts in their English lessons - and there is evidence of similar very good cross-curricular links with other curriculum areas across the school. Planned provision for pupils with special educational needs in lessons observed was good.

76. Leadership of the subject is good. There is a whole-school scheme of work in place for history, based broadly on government-recommended schemes of work and a good range of visits and visitors considerably enhances the curriculum. A whole-school system of end-of-topic assessments has been introduced and this provides the subject co-ordinators with a good overview of standards in the school. Resources for the subject are broadly satisfactory and good use is made of the local education authority library service, which provides boxes of topic-related books and artefacts. In addition, information and communication technology resources are well used by teachers and pupils.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

77. There were too few observations in art and design and design and technology for judgments on provision. However, an analysis of previous work and photographic evidence suggests that pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. Much of the success of pupils' work is a result of teachers' good planning which links art and design to other subjects within the topic framework. The levels of presentation, markedly of those pupils in Year 6, are mostly good.
78. There has been satisfactory improvement in **art and design** since the last inspection, A subject leader and a new scheme of work have raised the profile of the subject. Although the scheme of work supports teachers' planning there is room for adjustment to consider the development of skills more carefully. Younger pupils' work is well illustrated in literacy, geography, history and information and communication technology. Pupils use colour well and draw carefully, for example to illustrate the journeys of Barnaby Bear. Their portraits of friends are assured and when looking at the work of a famous artist such as Kandinsky they pick out the most arresting part to illustrate the artist's style. There is lively work on imagined aliens and well-displayed clay work on minibeasts. To some degree pupils tend to approach their work with caution and there is scope for the more opportunities for exploration.
79. By Year 6, portraiture has developed satisfactorily. Pupils investigate which materials will achieve the best result in collage work. There is careful planning in Year 6, where pupils have good opportunities to explore different aspects of imagery and movement in art. Although some drawing is immature, pupils are keen to practise the effects of movement in pastel, illustrated flick books and in rapid photography. Pupils have already researched, via the Internet, how famous artists and sculptors such as Picasso and Bocciono depict movement. Whilst these are presented well in sketchbooks, there is room for further exercising the pupils' talents and imagination.
80. The subject leader is new to the post and has yet to put the action plan in place. However, she has good support from senior management. Teaching assistants have had training in display and, as a result, pupils' work is celebrated well across the school.
81. No lessons were observed in design and technology but samples of previous work were scrutinised. Pupils' work in **design and technology** shows a similar standard of finish to their work in art and design. There has been satisfactory improvement in the subject since the last inspection. Teachers are more confident in their planning but still need support and training to encourage a more adventurous approach to product design. Younger pupils plan their designs and list what they need doing simple research. This results in the making of puppets and a variety of vehicles made from junk modelling materials. Older pupils' products are inclined towards the practical, such as purses, shelters and slippers. Products involving moving parts or complex fixings tend to be avoided. The quality of finish is variable but pupils are obviously proud of their work. In particular they recall their work from Celebration week

when they became aware that other subjects contributed to the skills they needed to complete their chosen project.

82. The subject leader is keen to continue to raise the profile of the subject across the school and has prepared assessment systems to encourage staff to make a more cohesive response to pupils' work. This is likely to improve when the monitoring and self-review systems are active in the near future.

Music

The provision in music is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in Year 2 and in Year 6 achieve above average standards.
- The quality of teaching is good.
- The joy of singing plays a significant part in school life.

Commentary

83. Standards are above average in both key stages and the pupils achieve well because they are well taught. Almost all music lessons are taught by one of a small team of specialist teachers and this ensures that the pupils successfully build on previous learning. The teachers' secure subject knowledge, combined with their clear enthusiasm for the subject, is infectious and it motivates the children. Consequently, many pupils learn to play the recorder and a significant minority of junior pupils avail themselves of the peripatetic music service, which enables them to learn a range of instruments including the violin, flute and cello.
84. The quality of singing for pupils' singing in Years 1 and 2 is good. They sing with enjoyment, maintaining pitch and rhythm successfully. Year 2 pupils clap rhythmically and sustain the beat, for example, when singing and accompanying on instruments simultaneously. In assemblies, the pupils sing enthusiastically and clearly enjoy introducing action to their songs. The weekly combined singing sessions contribute strongly to the pupils' performance. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 sing with accuracy and clarity and perform songs from a range of cultures and traditions with feeling and enthusiasm.
85. The subject is well led and managed. Good links have been forged with neighbouring schools to ensure that expertise and resources are shared and this enables the pupils to absorb a broad range of musical experiences. Furthermore, the curriculum is enriched through extra-curricular activities such as the singing and hand chime clubs.

Physical education

The provision for physical education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weakness

- The subject is very well supported by extra-curricular activities.
- Staff have a good level of expertise.

Commentary

86. Attainment is broadly average. Despite parental concerns about the school's lack of a playing field, the full range of sporting skills is covered. The curriculum has been revised and additional resources purchased in order to ensure that skills are developed progressively as pupils move

through the school. The emphasis in lessons is on the development of a range of skills with relatively few opportunities for playing full games. An extensive range of extra-curricular sports clubs provides additional possibilities for pupils including the chance to play team games.

87. Staff are confident in teaching most aspects of the curriculum and an element of specialist teaching ensures that all pupils receive their full entitlement. Previous leadership of the subject has ensured that physical education has maintained a high profile in the school and an appropriate amount of curriculum time that it receives. The new subject leader is keen and enthusiastic and has ideas for further development.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision for personal, social and health education and citizenship is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The provision for the children in the Foundation Stage establishes a secure basis for further learning.
- There is a strong sense of school community.
- There are very good relationships.
- Pupils have a clear understanding of the impact of their actions on others.

Commentary

88. Children in the Foundation Stage make a good start to their learning. Most children are likely to attain or exceed the Early Learning Goals before they leave the Reception class. The children are very secure and happy and quickly form very good relationships with adults and others in the school.
89. Adults provide a secure and happy environment where all are valued. Pupils learn to respect each other and accept that some pupils need special support. Teaching assistants, lunch-time supervisors and all of the adults working in the school treat pupils with respect and set a very good example, to which the pupils respond. Each week the teachers organise class discussions to enable the pupils to deal with emotions, feelings and their response to certain situations such as feeling friendless. Very good opportunities are provided for pupils to work with others. For example, representatives from each class take part in the school council and pupils in Years 5 and 6 in particular have many responsibilities around the school.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

The effectiveness of management

2

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