

INSPECTION REPORT

ENGLISH MARTYRS' R.C. PRIMARY SCHOOL

Urmston, Manchester

LEA area: Trafford

Unique reference number: 106352

Headteacher: Mr. T.J. O'Brien

Lead inspector: Mrs. D. Brigstock

Dates of inspection: 9th –11th February 2004

Inspection number: 256074

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:	158
School address:	Wycliffe Road Urmston Manchester Lancashire
Postcode:	M41 5AH
Telephone number:	0161 748 7257
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Rev. Michael Hoare
Date of previous inspection:	May 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

English Martyrs' R.C. Primary School is a smaller than average school with 158 pupils on roll, and serves the immediate parish. Few pupils either leave or join the school during the course of the year. The school is in the middle of a busy suburb of Manchester and pupils' socio-economic backgrounds and their attainment on entry are broadly average. Almost all pupils are white and have had some pre-school education. There are no pupils who are at an early stage of English language acquisition. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is broadly average and a below average proportion of pupils have special educational needs, most of whom have learning difficulties. At the time of the inspection there were no pupils with a statement of special educational needs.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
23067	Mrs. D. Brigstock	Lead inspector	Mathematics, Art and Design, Design Technology, Music, Physical Education
9981	Mr. S. Hussain	Lay inspector	
22046	Mrs. J. Jolliffe	Team inspector	English, Geography, History
23319	Mr. V Leary	Team inspector	Foundation Stage, Special Educational Needs, Science, Information and Communication Technology, Personal, Social and Health Education

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	8
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	10
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	15
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS	18
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	27

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school's **effectiveness is good** and it gives good value for money. Children enter the reception class with standards that are broadly average. By the time pupils leave the school, at the end of Year 6, standards are well above average. The quality of teaching is good overall and this means that all pupils achieve well. The school is well led and managed by the headteacher, key staff and the governors.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards are well above average in English and mathematics and above average in science and information and communication technology (ICT) by the end of Year 6, and pupils' achievement is good.
- The quality of teaching is good overall and there is a high percentage of very good teaching.
- The leadership and management of the headteacher and key staff are good, as is the work of the governors.
- The quality of information to parents concerning their children's progress is unsatisfactory, as are the school's procedures for taking account of parents' views.
- Pupils' attendance, behaviour and attitudes towards learning are very good.
- Some foundation subjects (subjects other than English, mathematics and science) have had limited development over the last few years so improvements in teaching in these areas are not as assured as in other subjects.

The school has made good improvement since the last inspection. The key issues from the last inspection in improving the accommodation of the school, the development of a broad and balanced curriculum for the reception class, and improving the monitoring role for key coordinators, plus writing a better school development plan, meeting statutory requirements and dealing with several urgent health and safety requirements have been addressed well.

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

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

Achievement is good overall. The table above shows that last year, standards were in the top five per cent of all schools in English. The pupils did much better than those in similar schools, indicating their very good achievement, particularly in English and mathematics. Current standards in Year 6 are above average overall and well above average in English and mathematics and pupils' achievement is also very good. In the 2003 tests in Year 2, standards were above average in writing and mathematics and below average in reading compared to similar schools, but achievement was good overall. Current pupils in Years 1 and 2 are attaining above average standards and their achievement is good. Current children in reception are on line to meet, and for a significant proportion, exceed, the goals they are expected to reach by the end of the year in all areas of learning. These children are also achieving well.

Pupils' personal qualities are good. Their attitudes to learning, behaviour and attendance are very good. **Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall.** It is very good in moral and social development and satisfactory in spiritual and cultural development.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good overall.

Teaching and learning are good. A higher proportion of very good teaching was seen than at the last inspection. The use of assessment information to maintain the above average standards is effective in setting targets, which pupils know and understand. In the best lessons, teachers use a variety of teaching styles and activities designed to promote learning which interest and engage pupils.

The curriculum is satisfactory. Although all programmes of study for the foundation subjects are planned and taught, there is scope for further development in these subjects. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good, and this group of pupils is supported well by a small group of knowledgeable and well-qualified teaching assistants and included in all the school has to offer. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory overall except for the outdoor facilities in the foundation stage, which are unsatisfactory. The provision for ICT has improved with the installation of a computer suite.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the headteacher and key staff are good. The governance of the school is good and governors fulfil all their statutory duties. They have a good knowledge of the school's finances and the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The good monitoring strategies, put in place by the headteacher, have been a key factor in raising the quality of teaching and learning, particularly with less experienced staff, and in developing the roles of key coordinators, particularly in English and mathematics, where both leadership and management are very good, thus maintaining pupils' good achievement despite changes to staffing.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Although the partnership with parents is satisfactory overall and parents are satisfied with the school, inspectors agree with a significant minority of parents that the information they receive on how well their children are doing is unsatisfactory, and their views on their children's education are not sought or acted upon well enough. Pupils have a better understanding of what happens in school and how well they are doing, and more positive views than their parents. They had no significant concerns.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve pupils' annual reports to parents so they give more explicit information on how well their children are achieving and consult parents more on issues which concern them.
- Increase the role that coordinators have to play in the development of the foundation subjects, thus raising the profile of these areas of learning.
- Improve the outdoor accommodation for children in the foundation stage.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement is a measure of how well pupils are doing, taking their progress and their capability into account.

Achievement is good in all years, regardless of gender, level of attainment or special educational needs. Standards are well above average in English and mathematics, and above average in ICT by the end of Years 2 and 6. Standards in science are above average in Year 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has maintained the well above average standards in English and mathematics reported at the last inspection and pupils' achievement is very good.
- Standards in science are well above average in Year 6 and pupils' achievement is good.
- Standards in ICT are above average in Years 2 and 6 and pupils' achievement is good.
- Standards in the reception class are above average in relation to the goals that children are expected to reach.
- Achievement for pupils with special educational needs is good.

Commentary

1. In the Year 2 national tests for 2003, results were above average in reading, and well above average in writing and mathematics. Teacher assessments in science show standards to be average. There were only 14 pupils in this year group so all data must be treated with caution. However, the trend for improvement over the last five years is broadly in line with the national trend. Current pupils in Year 2 are attaining well above average standards in English and mathematics and their achievement is good, because they also achieved well in the foundation stage and in Year 1. This is also true of ICT for pupils in Year 2.

The tables shown in this commentary give average points scores for pupils. Each level in the national curriculum is given a number of points. Pupils are expected to move on one point every term, so if a school's scores are one point above the national, their pupils are, typically, a term ahead.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.4 (18.4)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	16.4 (16.3)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	17.6 (17.9)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 14 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. In the Year 6 national tests for 2003, pupils attained very high standards in English, which were in the top five per cent of the results in the country. Standards attained in mathematics and science were well above average. Compared to their prior attainment in Year 2, pupils' achievement was very good in English and mathematics and good in science. Over the last five years, the trend for improvement has been above the national trend. Current pupils in Year 6 are attaining well above average standards in English and mathematics and their achievement is very good. In science and in ICT, they are attaining above average standards and their achievement is good.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	30.5 (29.6)	26.8 (27)
mathematics	29.5 (29.5)	26.8 (26.7)
science	30.7 (30.8)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 26 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3. Pupils achieve so well because the quality of teaching is good and because pupils' own very good attitudes towards learning contribute very well to their desire to improve and to their learning. Teachers' planning is very good and work is carefully matched to ensure that the learning needs of different groups of pupils within each class are met. There is a good emphasis on the use of subject specific language and learning through first hand investigations. Teachers' expectations are high and pupils strive to meet them.
4. Pupils with special educational needs and those who are gifted and talented achieve well throughout the school. Teachers and well-qualified teaching assistants are aware of pupils' strengths and weaknesses through assessment records, and use this information well to plan and prepare work for this group of pupils. This ensures that these pupils receive the necessary support to achieve success, particularly in English and mathematics.
5. There has been a marked improvement in the provision for the reception class since the last inspection. On entry to the school, children's skills in speaking and listening, numeracy, and personal and social qualities are broadly average. Currently children's achievement is good and a significant number of children are likely to exceed the goals set for them in personal, social, language and mathematical development by the time they leave the reception class.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Attendance is very good and punctuality is good. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' very good attitudes to learning and very good behaviour in the classrooms help them to achieve well. The school's expectations for pupils' behaviour are very high.
- Relationships between pupils and between pupils and staff are very good; this is the result of the caring ethos of the school and the very good example set by the staff.
- Pupils are very confident and very keen to take responsibility.
- Pupils' moral and social development is very good.

Commentary

6. Pupils very show good attitudes to learning throughout the school. They listen attentively, are keen to answer questions and undertake tasks enthusiastically. This is partly as a result of the school's very high expectations of good behaviour and manners, which are modelled very well by all staff. Also, teachers maintain a high level of interest in lessons by setting appropriately challenging and interesting tasks that ensure that pupils of all levels of attainment have the opportunity to achieve well. Teachers ensure that good effort by pupils is well rewarded both orally and in their written comments in books, and the very good relationships which exist between all members of the school community permit honest and open discussions between pupils and their teachers.

7. Pupils with special educational needs have very good attitudes to school. Most are attentive and follow instructions well. Pupils are confident and show enthusiasm for learning. They work well together and support each other in their learning. During the week of the inspection there were many opportunities in lessons for pupils to share their ideas and support each other. For example, in an ICT lesson in Y2, pupils worked in pairs so that pupils with special educational needs were helped in developing their word processing skills by higher attaining pupils. This strategy was effective, with all pupils making good progress.
8. Standards of behaviour are very good throughout the school day and pupils play well together. Some older pupils act as 'monitors' in the playground. They wear fluorescent tabards so that they can be easily recognised and they do their best to ensure that no one feels left out of activities. All pupils discuss and agree class rules and are fully aware of the high standards expected and insisted upon by all staff. The caring ethos of the school results in pupils knowing right from wrong and showing consideration for others. Rare incidences of aggressive behaviour or bullying are dealt with well.
9. From the day they start school, children are encouraged to become independent and willingly take on a range of responsibilities appropriate to their age. This contributes to the way that children exceed the goals they are expected to reach, in their personal and social education, by the end of reception. Responsibilities range from helping each other to dress and undress for physical education lessons to monitoring behaviour in the playgrounds in Year 6. Pupils take their responsibilities of living in a community, particularly in their involvement with the church, seriously and achieve well, showing good levels of maturity as they move through the school.
10. There are few pupils from ethnic minority groups but the school ensures that pupils experience some of the traditions of a wider range of other local cultures in lessons, for example, geography, but particularly in religious education, where most of their personal, social and health education also takes place. This is an improvement since the last inspection when cultural development was unsatisfactory. The very good ethos of the school and assemblies, where, for example, pupils think about the quality of 'stillness' to bring them nearer to God, promotes pupils' spiritual development satisfactorily. Pupils' moral and social development is very good.
11. Attendance has improved well since the last inspection and is now very good. This makes a significant contribution to learning and achievement. Punctuality is good. Occasionally, attendance and punctuality are not appropriately recorded in registers and the school must guard against this. There were no exclusions last year.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	3.2	School data	0
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.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is good. Teaching and learning are good. The curriculum is satisfactory, as is the range of extra-curricular activities provided. Links with other schools and the community are good. The quality of care given to pupils is satisfactory overall.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good overall. In the foundation stage, teaching, learning and assessment are good. In Years 1 to 4, teaching and learning are good overall, but in the two classes for the older

pupils that include Years 5 and 6 with some pupils from Year 4, teaching, learning and the use of assessment to raise standards are consistently very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers' planning is detailed, caters well for different groups of pupils within each class, and takes pupils' prior learning into account well.
- Teachers' use of challenging questions and insistence on using good, subject specific language is maintaining high standards.
- The quality of marking and use of assessment are good.
- Teaching assistants are used well to support groups of pupils in their learning.
- Teaching in reception has improved well since the last inspection.
- Occasionally, there is an overuse of worksheets and teachers tend to dominate discussions.

Commentary

12. The quality of lesson planning is good throughout the school, and demonstrates the level of expectation and challenge which teachers provide, particularly in the two oldest classes of the higher attaining Year 4 and all Year 5 and 6 pupils, where it is very good. In these classes, teachers use the widest range of strategies to promote learning which contain a very good mix of techniques such as individual, group and interactive whole class teaching. They provide a rich variety of different activities in lessons, striking a very good balance between oral, practical and written work, which engages pupils in their learning very well, while insisting on the correct use of subject specific vocabulary and high standards of presentation of work. One very effective strategy used was to take a wrong answer and, without belittling the pupil concerned, lead the class to discover where the mistake had been made, for example on a mathematical calculation, and lead them to understand and learn from this. This high quality teaching, and good use of assessment, is a key factor in pupils' good learning and standards of achievement, particularly in English, mathematics and science. Throughout the school, teachers ask probing questions which are designed to make pupils reason out their answers using the knowledge they have already learned to make new connections and learn new facts. Pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour in lessons, which are praised by teachers, ensure no lesson time is wasted. In the only unsatisfactory lesson seen, the teacher's expectations were too high and pupils were unable to understand what they had to do, leading to unsatisfactory learning.
13. Teachers provide a good example to pupils in the quality and constructiveness of their marking. Teachers refer to pupils' individual targets and set new ones when old ones have been achieved. The information gained in this constructive assessment, feeds into the next set of lesson planning documents ensuring that the activities planned build on what pupils already know and can do. These actions by teachers, their planning, delivery of lessons and the results of assessments are carefully monitored by the headteacher and his deputy and informative and constructive advice is given to maintain the high standards of teaching, particularly with less experienced staff.
14. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) is good overall. They are included in all the school has to offer. Most teachers have an appropriate understanding of the curriculum needs for pupils who have individual difficulties, especially in English and mathematics. They take care to plan activities using strategies which take account of pupils' capabilities. For instance, in a lesson for pupils in Years 5 and 6, two pupils with SEN used an ICT program, on laptop computers, to improve their spelling skills. This had a good impact on their learning, not only because they made good progress but also because it involved them in working independently. Well-qualified teaching assistants are fully involved in individual class planning and are well briefed. They not only support pupils with SEN, but also, as seen in an art lesson for Year 4 pupils, prepare resources and give direct teaching, enabling the teacher to teach another group of pupils in a different subject.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 25 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	8	9	7	1	0	0

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

15. In the reception class, teaching and learning are good and consequently children make good progress and achieve well. Learning is, overall, an enjoyable and challenging experience. The teacher, in a productive partnership with a well-qualified nursery nurse, uses a range of teaching strategies and techniques which encourage children to be independent, active learners. These staff know their children very well as their formal and informal assessment provision and implementation are of a good quality. Learning is firmly focused on individual children's needs and abilities.
16. In lessons that were satisfactory as opposed to good, teachers tended to over direct discussions, not allowing pupils to answer as fully as they might and so losing opportunities to extend pupils' learning. Also, in some of the foundation subjects, pupils use pre-prepared worksheets which restrict their opportunities to record their thoughts and findings in their own way.

The curriculum

The overall curriculum provision is satisfactory. The range of opportunities to enrich pupils' learning is satisfactory. The accommodation is satisfactory, as is the range of available resources to meet the needs of pupils.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- The school's participation in sporting activities outside the school day is good.
- The role of curriculum coordinators in foundation subjects requires development.
- More opportunities are needed to develop literacy skills in the foundation subjects.
- Outdoor provision in the foundation stage is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

17. Pupils with special educational needs are identified as early as possible and appropriate steps are taken to assess their needs, write individual educational plans (IEPs) and provide support. Individual educational plans are reviewed but pupils' input into shaping their IEPs is limited. The school is very committed to raising the achievements of all pupils. Pupils with special educational needs have full access to the curriculum and to educational visits.
18. The school ensures that the overall curriculum provision meets statutory requirements, enabling pupils to achieve well in response to good teaching. Nevertheless, much of the focus for school development has been in English, mathematics and science. There has been limited monitoring of the curriculum in other areas and, as a result, there are some inconsistencies in provision. For example, literacy is well developed through history but not through geography. Some helpful links are made between different subjects, for instance time lines and mathematical pie charts have been used in geography.
19. A range of strategies are used to good effect in raising standards, for instance to improve writing and speaking and listening skills. The ICT curriculum has been improved since the last inspection and is now good. Planning is clear, coherent and caters well for individual needs

including those of pupils with special educational needs and, sometimes, gifted and talented pupils. The good support of teaching assistants is well focused, ensuring that pupils with special educational needs are well integrated in the classroom and achieving their targets. There are appropriate overall targets for improvement set for English, mathematics and science, and pupils have individual targets to help them improve.

20. The pupils' social education is particularly good because of the good role models shown by all members of staff, and the respect shown to each other and members of the school community. Appropriate attention is paid to drugs education and whilst the governors have decided that sex education will not be taught, certain aspects of personal care are delivered to girls by the school nurse. Several aspects of pupils' personal, social and health education are appropriately delivered through science and religious education. Ample opportunities are given to pupils to learn responsibility as well as a sense of belonging to a community.
21. Pupils participate in a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities. Links with Ashton-on-Mersey Sports College, Manchester Football Association and Manchester City Football Club enrich the sports curriculum well. Pupils have experienced interesting visits to the Lowry Museum, Styall Mill, Wigan Pier and the Jorvic centre in York. Pupils' learning is also enriched by the contribution made to the curriculum by volunteers, such as an ex-pupil who took part in a history lesson. The homework club is well attended and supports learning. A useful home-school reading record for pupils in Years 1 and 2 is well maintained, and the use of homework supports learning well across the school.
22. There are mixed-age classes in Years 3 to 6, due to restrictions in the school budget. This was a concern discussed by parents who attended the parents' meeting. Inspectors found that the school has devised a two-year rolling programme and topics covered by pupils are now carefully tracked so that there is continuity and duplication is avoided.
23. Although space is limited the accommodation is well cared for by the headteacher, the caretaker and the pupils so that there is a very pleasant environment for learning. The caretaker is particularly dutiful in ensuring that the premises are clean and well organised. Resources are well cared for. There is a small but comfortable, well organised and resourced library in Years 3 to 6, which is put to good use by teachers and pupils for independent research, and an adequate 15-station computer suite which is helping to raise standards in ICT.
24. The curriculum is regularly reviewed and monitored and is well coordinated by the deputy headteacher. In the foundation stage, the school has shaped its own curriculum, which is underpinned by established principles for early years education. There is, overall, carefully structured provision where children are engaged well in activities planned by adults and those they plan themselves. This results in the children having greater ownership of their learning. However, opportunities for teaching and learning outside are limited, because activities are mainly teacher led with few opportunities for child-initiated activities. This is due to the outdoor area being the large, main school playground. The school is aware of the need to construct a designated area for children in the foundation stage, and has plans to improve the accommodation for this area of the curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

This is a caring school with sound provision for giving support, advice and guidance to all pupils based on monitoring. Consequently, pupils are happy, feel valued and are able to learn and achieve well. Pupils are involved well in the school's work. The school has made a few improvements in this area of its work since the last inspection and addressed the identified health and safety issues.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have very good, trusting relationships with adults in school, and this is a good improvement since the last inspection.
- The school has good arrangements to seek, value and act on pupils' views.
- Although the school is a healthy and safe environment, risk assessment procedures are not rigorous enough.

Commentary

25. New children to the school are gradually inducted. Most children are admitted from the pre-school playgroup that is based on the premises, so they are already familiar with the general school environment.
26. This school has a strong family ethos and relationships between pupils and adults are very good. Staff work together to support all pupils in their learning. Information is appropriately used to set targets for learning and gives pupils sound advice, support and guidance. Pupils' concerns are handled with sensitivity and care. Where necessary, the school engages support specialists such as the educational psychologist, audio, visual and speech therapists. This illustrates the school's inclusive approach to learning. Pupils with special educational needs know they are very well cared for and valued and this has a positive impact on their learning.
27. There are many opportunities for pupils to make their views known to staff and become involved in the school. For instance, they can raise issues through the school council. It is pleasing to see that the school has adopted several of their suggestions, for example, about the accommodation, outdoor benches and plants.
28. The school's designated officer for child protection is appropriately trained and there are sound arrangements to inform staff about the school's policy and procedures. General health and safety risk assessment is undertaken but staff have not had enough training in these procedures. In addition, monitoring procedures are under-developed. There are good procedures to deal with accidents and first aid. The school works effectively with external agencies to promote health and safety. For example, the school nurse visits the school each week and supports health education well.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

This is a very similar picture to that of the last inspection. Although there are significant issues to address, the school has a satisfactory partnership with parents overall. There are good community links, including those with other schools and colleges. These factors make a significant contribution to learning and achievement.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has unsatisfactory arrangements to seek, value and act on parents' views.
- Written information to parents is unsatisfactory regarding their children's standards and progress.
- Parents make a good contribution to their children's learning at school and at home.
- The school has established many links in the wider community that enrich learning.

Commentary

29. The results of the parents' questionnaires and issues raised at their pre-inspection meeting show that most parents have a satisfactory opinion of the school and its work. However, parents are rightly concerned about the information they receive, the lack of provision to

consider their views, and the lack of explanation about how parents can support homework and learning generally.

30. Although staff are always happy to listen to individual concerns or issues, parents are not formally consulted, nor do they have enough chances to raise whole school issues. Consequently, policies and practices can change without all parents having a say. An example of the problems that arise is the dissatisfaction about the decision to change the timing of parents' consultation evenings. Parents were understandably confused as the decision was not communicated in writing.
31. Pupils' annual reports are unsatisfactory because they do not state clearly enough how well pupils are performing in their academic subjects. The grade-based system used currently is cumbersome and there is a lack of narrative explanation. The school has effective links with parents of pupils with special educational needs and liaison takes place on a regular basis. Parents discuss progress and future targets at the parents' evenings and there are also informal opportunities for contact with teachers. Parents are provided with useful information on day-to-day matters and forthcoming events through regular newsletters.
32. The 'Friends of English Martyrs' School' work hard in organizing many social and fundraising events. Money raised is used to support school funds or particular projects. Several parents help regularly in school, for example, with after-school sports and school trips. Parents help their children as much as they can with homework tasks.
33. Wider community links include those with the parish church, local businesses, sports clubs, the health services, universities and colleges. Both Manchester City Football Club and the Manchester Football Academy provide much coaching for pupils. The school puts much back in to the community. For instance, fundraising through 'St Joseph's Penny' supports several good causes each year, and parents and pupils make up parcels for distribution at harvest time.
34. Good educational links with other schools include several secondary schools. Pupils can take advantage of 'summer schools' operating at Loretto and St Ambrose grammar schools and a 'bridging project' to support the transition is about to start. There are good mechanisms in place for the transfer of pupils to secondary schools.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good overall. The headteacher provides effective leadership and a clear educational direction for the school. The leadership of senior staff is good overall. Management has improved as a result of the development of clear roles and responsibilities for key staff and is good. The governance of the school is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has been effective in tackling the key issues identified in the previous report.
- Arrangements for monitoring, supporting and developing teaching are good and have led to improvements in teaching quality.
- Senior managers and those for literacy, numeracy and the foundation stage provide good leadership and manage their areas well but the role of some co-ordinators needs developing further.
- The school's budget is monitored well and finances used efficiently, driven by the school improvement plan.
- The governing body has a good understanding of the school and is becoming increasingly effective in its role as critical friend.

Commentary

35. The headteacher provides good leadership and direction that have maintained the school's high standards. There are high expectations and a calm, caring and purposeful working atmosphere pervades the school. Pupils feel that they are valued and respected and are able to play a part in the school's development. There is a strong sense of teamwork, as evidenced through the encouragement and support offered to colleagues, the value given to them and the recognition of their skills and competencies. The senior management team has been effective in developing the role of subject leaders of English and mathematics. The leadership and management of both these areas is very good. There is a sharp focus on 'tracking' the progress of pupils and monitoring the curriculum effectively, and taking action to ensure that improvements are made. As a result, high standards have been maintained in English and mathematics.
36. Teachers, in their roles as coordinators, have previously had little time to undertake their responsibilities, and, as a result, little had been done to find out how effective provision was in their areas. Coordinators are now given regular release time to lead and manage their subjects and areas of responsibility. However, recent staff changes, including the appointment of two newly qualified teachers, have necessitated interim arrangements being put in place for staff to oversee provision in the foundation subjects. Some staff now lead and manage too many subjects, resulting in limited evaluations of strengths and weaknesses in some foundation subjects. This is slowing down developments in these areas. There is effective leadership of the foundation stage, which is led by a conscientious and knowledgeable teacher. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection.
37. Effective leadership has ensured that the standards achieved compare well with similar schools and the achievement of the higher attaining pupils is consistently good. Although most effort has been put into raising standards in English and mathematics, standards are above average in science and ICT. Provision in other subjects is only satisfactory. Good steps are taken to improve teaching through observations by the headteacher and senior management team, resulting in an improvement in the quality of teaching since the previous inspection. The school provides a good quality education for pupils with special educational needs. There is an experienced special educational needs co-ordinator who manages and organises the provision to a good standard supported by the headteacher. She is aware of the strengths and weaknesses in this provision, and has put in place a realistic action plan. Current areas for development are to raise the attainment of boys in mathematics further, and to develop the role of teaching assistants more in their support of pupils with special educational needs. There is good support for new teachers and for the professional development of all staff related to the needs of the school. Support staff are well deployed and are generally effective in their respective roles.
38. The governors work as a united and effective team. They consider external evaluations of the school and take account of data that shows how well pupils are achieving. As a result, they have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Regular visits to look at the work of subject co-ordinators and talk with staff also help them to get a feel for what is happening in the school. Improvements to the school buildings, which have been dependent on external funding, have been managed well, but the lack of funds has restricted enhancements to the outside foundation stage accommodation. The governors have taken action to tackle an overspend and have now produced a balanced budget. While doing this, they have weighed up the impact of their spending decisions. The financial skills of the vice chair have been central to the school's effective financial control and management. Governors have a clear understanding of how they want the school to develop.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	295670	Balance from previous year	1780

Total expenditure	297933	Balance carried forward to the next	-483
Expenditure per pupil	1973		

Note: The budget is now in credit as the school was expecting and has received an additional £9000 to its income.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

39. The provision found in most areas of learning since the previous inspection has improved and is now good. Assessment procedures have been refined with initial assessments carried out when children enter Reception. On entry to the school, their skills in speaking and listening, numeracy, and personal and social qualities are broadly average. A significant number of children are likely to exceed the goals set for them in personal, social, language and mathematical development by the time they leave the Reception class.
40. Leadership and management are good. There is a clear view of what the foundation stage should be, with strong support and teamwork from an experienced and enthusiastic assistant. These practitioners are competent in the implementing of the foundation stage curriculum. There has been a significant improvement in provision since the previous inspection.
41. Throughout each area of learning, the quality of teaching and learning is good and consequently children make good progress and achieve well apart from in their physical development, where their achievement is satisfactory. This is because the outside learning area needs further development and currently does not provide a limited, safe area in which children can explore and learn independently. Learning is overall an enjoyable and challenging experience. With the exception of work outside, the teacher, in a productive partnership with a well-qualified nursery nurse, uses a range of teaching strategies and techniques which encourage children to be independent, active learners. These staff know their children very well as their formal and informal assessment provision and implementation are of a good quality. Learning is firmly focused on individual children's needs and abilities.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are varied opportunities for children to work together in well-planned activities that increase their independence and social skills within the classroom environment.
- Children sustain their concentration well.
- Staff support and encourage children well so that they gain confidence and develop a sense of belonging.

Commentary

42. The good provision for this area of learning means that children settle in extremely well to routines, making good progress in developing their personal, social and emotional skills. The calm, welcoming atmosphere, which presents children with a wide range of interesting and purposeful experiences and the very good interaction between staff and children, positively affect the attitudes to learning that they develop. The reception class philosophy of encouraging children to be independent active learners influences the teaching and learning strategies. Children are given choices of stimulating activities within the security of established routines and well-planned activities. The impact is that all children are developing confidence and independence in taking responsibility for their own actions. They get out their own equipment and quickly become absorbed in tasks. A notable feature is the children's ability to persevere with a task until it is completed. For instance, when carrying out a 'lacing' activity, children were absorbed and remained resolutely on task until completion. The nursery nurse works in close partnership with the teacher, often anticipating children's needs and playing a significant part in guiding learning. Children baking gingerbread 'homes' demonstrated their developing skills in relationships when taking turns in the preparation of their gingerbread biscuits. The majority of

children will reach the goals expected by the end of the reception year and a significant number will exceed them. Their achievement is good.

43. There is very good support for children with special educational needs. As a result, these children develop confidence and work happily with others.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Planning and preparation for children ensure that they build on their skills well.
- Activities provided are relevant in developing children's communication skills and enjoyment of language.
- There need to be more opportunities for children to practise writing independently.

Commentary

44. Most children are likely to reach the goals expected at the end of the reception year and a significant minority will exceed them. Children's achievement is good. The good provision for this area of learning ensures that children are developing a wide range of communication, language and literacy skills. Children are encouraged to extend their use of language, for example through role-play. For instance, children pretended to be estate agents and they talked to each other about the different types of houses for sale. Teachers arrange for children to develop an awareness of phonics in interesting and enjoyable ways. Arising from such an activity, several children could hear and say the initial letter sounds in words. Staff share stories and picture books with children, who learn to listen to, enjoy, and join in with stories and rhymes. This develops a love of books and the exciting possibilities of learning to read. They enjoy turning the pages of picture books in the library area and some children are able to read simple sentences. There are opportunities for children to use writing in their play. For example, the higher attaining children made cards for friends who are moving into a new home, some producing good quality writing. One child wrote: 'Congratulations on your new home. I hope you have a happy time.' using full stops and capital letters. However, although there is planned provision for writing for different purposes there is a need for more opportunities for children to initiate their own independent writing activities. Early reading skills develop well because of the good teaching.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching helps children develop their skills step by step.
- There are well organised practical activities for children to learn and practise mathematical skills across the curriculum.

Commentary

45. By the time they reach the end of the reception year most children are likely to reach the goals expected and a significant number will exceed them. Children's achievement is good. Activities are well planned to help children build up their skills step-by-step, resulting in good achievement. The good provision, which incorporates a wide range of mathematical experiences, enables children to develop good mathematical skills. Most children use number names and make correspondingly accurate taps up to 20 and beyond. In a class session

relating to pattern making, the teacher used very effectively a range of stimulating activities to develop children's understanding of patterns as repeating motifs. They talked about patterns on their curtains and wallpaper at home. Using fabric prints they printed onto fabric, making a good link with their creative development. Some children were able to produce patterns identifying colour and shape as the features. Throughout this activity close attention was paid to the vocabulary of pattern making. The expectations of staff and suitable challenge ensure that children achieve well in work that is well matched to their abilities. Learning is enriched by mathematical skills being developed across the curriculum.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's ICT skills are being developed well.
- Investigating objects and materials is contributing to their good achievement.

Commentary

46. Children are provided with a wide range of purposeful, interesting and appropriate activities. The staff make good use, on occasions, of the school grounds for investigations to develop the children's knowledge and understanding of their world. For instance, in their topic on houses, they investigated guttering and made waterway constructions to collect water. This increased their understanding of the purposes of guttering and pipes, and how to adapt and make changes to their construction to make it work better. Children become familiar with the computer and learn to use the mouse and keyboard as they explore different programs designed to foster early learning skills. They acquire different sets of skills and knowledge as they design and make different types of houses working with various paints, paper, fabrics and tools. Teaching is good as it involves the children in well organised activities where the children are active learners.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children use a range of materials and ICT to express their ideas.
- Children are given time to explore and enjoy different media.

Commentary

47. Children develop a range of skills, using creative materials and tools. They produce attractive paintings, drawings and collage pictures, which decorate the classroom and celebrate their achievements. Using junk modelling materials the children made replicas of houses. They acquire different sets of skills and knowledge as they use ICT to design their own house. Children learn to tap out rhythms, using percussion instruments to accompany rhymes and songs. These sessions are well organised by the staff, allowing the children opportunities and time to enjoy and experience success in a range of well planned activities.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Learning outside is limited with few opportunities for child-initiated activities.
- Physical development is fostered well in organised physical education lessons, thereby increasing children's skills in control and co-ordination.

Commentary

48. Teachers prepare well planned activities for outside which are carefully supervised. However, the outdoor area is underdeveloped as a facility for developing the children's physical skills because children share the same playground space as other pupils and the markings on the playground are not designed to meet their needs. Due to this, there are also limited opportunities for children to be involved in a varied range of self-initiated activities, thereby limiting children's progress in independent learning. Most children are developing a sense of space and an awareness of how to share the hall floor area sensibly and safely with other children in the class. The teaching is clearly focused on developing not only physical skills, but also on children learning the importance of movement as a means of keeping healthy. The children are adept at manipulating different tools and equipment safely, and with increasing control. For example, children, using plastic knives demonstrated good co-ordination skills when cutting out their gingerbread houses.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above average throughout the school, particularly in writing, and pupils' achievement is very good. This is similar to the findings in the last inspection.
- Teaching is very good.
- The support of the teaching assistants is very effective.
- Pupils take great pride in their work.
- There is scope for further development of extended writing in the foundation subjects.
- Leadership and management are very good.

Commentary

49. National test results indicate that pupils are attaining well above the national average at the end of Years 2 and 6. This is demonstrated in the test scores over the last two years. In the 2003 tests for Year 2 pupils, whilst there was a dip in reading results, scores were still above average and achievement was good. For pupils at the end of Year 6, results were in the top five per cent of the country and their achievement was very good. There is no significant difference between girls and boys.

50. Currently standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are well above the national average. Many pupils in Year 2 are already working at level 3 (above the national average) and lower attaining pupils at near the national average. The picture in Year 6 is very similar. Speaking and listening skills are good. Pupils express themselves well and are confident speakers. Handwriting is notably very good, as is the quality of pupils' writing. Extended writing is often very good and the use of punctuation is remarkably good, even in Year 2. For instance, there are several examples of the use of capital letters followed by exclamation marks to emphasise and indicate surprise at the end of sentences. The higher attaining pupils in Year 2 are using connectives such as 'first', 'next' and 'later' correctly to give shape and organisation to their writing, and have produced some written work, including play scripts and reports of very good quality. Year 6 pupils write

very well in different styles, for instance story telling, reports and poetry. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are achieving well and those in Years 3 to 6 are achieving very well. There is no marked difference between boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs are achieving very well throughout the school and gifted and talented pupils are being well challenged and consequently are all achieving very well.

51. Teaching in English is very good overall - it is never less than good. Planning and assessment are thorough and take account of pupils' individual needs. Teachers use questioning effectively to probe and extend learning. The pace and challenge in lessons are good and promote progress well. Pupils' progress is carefully tracked so that each pupil is building on prior learning, including those with special educational needs and those who have been identified as gifted. National strategies are used to very good effect. Teachers' expectations are high and this is reflected in the standard of presentation of written work. Standards of speaking and listening have risen due to the special attention given to these areas and this has helped to underpin the very good quality of extended writing. Homework is regularly given and is always helpful in developing literacy skills. Marking is encouraging and guides pupils to improve their work. The support of teaching assistants is very good. Their input is very effective and ensures that individual learning needs, particularly of those with special educational needs, are well met.
52. Pupils have very good attitudes to learning. They settle down to work quickly and behave impeccably, allowing teaching and learning to progress without any interruption. They apply themselves very well to their work individually, in pairs and in small groups. They take pride in their work which is beautifully presented.
53. Leadership and management are both very good and have had a very positive impact on the subject since the last inspection. The coordinator has a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject through the thorough assessments that are undertaken, and plans future developments well through action planning.

Literacy across the curriculum

54. Literacy skills are well developed in history. In other foundation subjects there is scope to provide more opportunities for extended writing. In geography, for instance, worksheets are often used which limit the amount and quality of writing. Presentation of written work, particularly where there is extended writing, is of good quality. It is neat, well punctuated and includes a good range of subject specific vocabulary.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils consistently attain well above average standards by the end of Year 6 and Year 2 and pupils' achievement is very good overall due to pupils' very good attitudes to learning and very good leadership and management of the subject.
- The action plans for the further development of the subject and how actions are measured could be more explicit.
- Teaching is good overall. Teachers ensure that pupils use the knowledge they gain to investigate and solve problems well.

Commentary

55. There are several reasons why well above average standards and very good achievement have been maintained since the last inspection. The co-ordinator has a very good knowledge and understanding of the subject and is well qualified to lead its development. She gives very good leadership and has closely monitored standards in partnership with the headteacher and the

deputy. Any areas of potential weakness have been swiftly addressed. For example, the school analyses test results with care to identify which pupils need additional help and to purchase resources to meet these needs. The impact of these measures is then tracked with care. Pupils' attitudes towards learning are very good. They do their homework on time, settle quickly to work and concentrate well in lessons, ensuring no time is wasted.

56. The coordinator analyses test results very carefully and then orders the resources to raise standards further. She monitors work in books well and makes suggestions on how it can be improved. She has a very good grasp of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject. For example, after looking carefully at test results, she provided additional training on formal methods of recording problem solving as this was not as strong as pupils' understanding of mental strategies. The progress and learning in mixed-age classes were concerns expressed by some parents, but the inspection did not find that this was having a detrimental effect on standards in mathematics, because the coordinator has successfully led the use of the numeracy strategy's guidance for teaching mixed age classes. This is proving effective in maintaining well above average standards. The coordinator constructs an action plan annually for this subject's further development. There is scope to improve the criteria by which success is measured through the addition of more specific numerical targets for each year group, for example, by including the proportion of pupils on line to achieve well in each class.
57. Teaching is good overall and very good in Years 4/5 and 5/6, where teachers have very high but achievable expectations of what pupils can learn. For example, in both classes, the pace of lessons is very good, and teachers, through constantly interacting with their pupils, correct any misunderstandings as they arise and use these as teaching points to improve pupils' understanding, and their learning, ensuring no time is wasted. Teachers set targets to indicate which level each pupil is expected to reach by the end of each year and these are regularly reviewed. The quality of marking is good. Teachers refer to the targets each pupil has to achieve and set new targets for pupils to achieve.
58. Teachers' planning is very good throughout the school and caters well for pupils with different levels of attainment. Daily lesson plans build well on what has already been learned and teachers model how to use prior knowledge well to solve problems. In two very good lessons, teachers encouraged pupils to visualise three-dimensional shapes, and struck a very good balance between this, using practical apparatus to construct shapes and check their solutions, and recording their answers to problems that had been set. The use of this variety of strategies engages pupils well in their learning. In the only unsatisfactory lesson seen, the teachers' introductory problem was too difficult for the pupils and, although their individual tasks were set at the right level, they were de-motivated by being unable to solve the first problem and their confidence and then their learning suffered.

Mathematics across the curriculum

59. There is a satisfactory range of opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical skills in other subjects. For example, in measuring ingredients in cookery, and in using databases in geography and ICT.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average and pupils' achievement is good by the end of Year 6.
- There is a good emphasis on developing pupils' skills of scientific enquiry.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the different strands of scientific knowledge.
- There are not enough opportunities for pupils to design their own investigations.

- The use of scientific vocabulary and evaluation of work are well developed among higher attaining pupils.

Commentary

60. Results from the national tests in 2003 show that, by the end of Year 6, pupils attained standards that were well above average compared to schools nationally and their achievement was good. In Year 6, pupils are attaining above average standards and their achievement is good. This is because the quality of teaching is consistently good in Years 3 to 6. Standards at the end of Year 6 have been maintained since the previous inspection. Currently, pupils are attaining average standards in science by the end of Year 2, but inconsistencies in the quality of teaching have limited the achievement of higher attaining pupils by the end of Year 2. These findings reflect those made for Year 6 at the last inspection, but achievement in science is now judged to be less good by Year 2.
61. Overall teaching is good. Teachers' planning makes good use of the schemes of work to ensure that pupils access the different strands of scientific knowledge. Clear explanations and prepared resources support pupils' acquisition of knowledge, as was seen in a high quality Year 6 lesson on exploring 'pitch'. The teacher's high quality instructional teaching was complemented by understanding of the different ways in which pupils learn, for example, through group discussions, experimentation and pupil demonstrations, so pupils were animated and well motivated. Her insistence on pupils demonstrating their ideas using the correct technical language and explaining their findings resulted in all pupils being active learners who achieved well scientifically and enhanced their literacy skills. Teaching and learning are less effective when there is too much teacher led discussion, an over-use of worksheets, and structured set experiments that limit pupils' imagination in designing their own investigations. As a result higher attaining pupils do not make as much progress as they should.
62. Pupils have sound scientific knowledge. Year 2 pupils talk enthusiastically about their work on changing materials from solids to liquids and sorting materials. They have a good scientific vocabulary, using terms such as, 'squash', 'cool', 'freeze' and 'melt'. They can describe how heating can change objects and record their observations. Year 6 pupils are equally enthusiastic. They describe work on evaporation and condensation well and have a clear understanding of 'fair testing.' Analysis of the Year 6 work indicates that lower attaining and average pupils make good progress in the development of scientific skills. Teachers place strong emphasis on the development of pupils' scientific vocabulary, thereby improving pupils' skills in writing investigation reports. Notably, in classes containing Years 4/5 and 5/6 pupils are rigorously challenged to justify predictions or conclusions and evaluate results in their reports. As a result higher attaining pupils' understanding of the scientific method is well developed.
63. The leadership and management of the newly appointed, enthusiastic coordinator are currently satisfactory. She has made a good start by identifying ICT links and updating the policy. There is a subject development plan which is a useful planning tool. Analysis of previous test results has identified strengths and weaknesses.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers make good use of available resources and regularly ensure pupils' work is reinforced at home enabling pupils to make good progress.
- ICT features well in most subjects of the curriculum.
- The subject is well led and managed and consequently good achievement is maintained.
- Recent thefts of classroom computers have meant that not all pupils can practise their skills within the classrooms.

Commentary

64. Pupils reach standards that are above average at the end of Years 2 and 6 and are achieving well in all years.
65. Teaching is good. Pupils have some time each week in which ICT skills are taught and ICT is regularly used in other subjects. The key to progress has been the improvement in resources, accommodation and teacher training in ICT. There is now an ICT suite and laptops are available to all classes. Over time, all groups of pupils undertake tasks which cover all strands of the curriculum. For example, they use word processors, spreadsheets and databases. They control floor turtles and use digital cameras. In addition, computer software is used to provide support for lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. In specific ICT lessons, most pupils, throughout the school, make good progress because they are taught well. Teachers make good use of the ICT suite in lessons so that pupils develop confidence and key skills well. For example, in Year 2, pupils select from the icons on the computer desktop quickly, to load up their previously saved writing. A very clear focus to the lesson helped them to rearrange the text into lists, some printing off their work in different fonts. As a result, pupils know how to edit written work very capably, achieving good skills in this aspect of ICT. Their very good behaviour shows how enthusiastic they are to learn. In Year 6, pupils explain how confidently they can use the laptops to prepare and present a presentation on screen using a well-known program. They talked about "simulation software". Many understood that these kind of programs help people see things on a computer that happen elsewhere, in real life, or imaginary worlds. They confidently discuss their ICT experiences in plotting graphs, looking for errors in databases, designing playgrounds or using the internet, for example, to obtain information on World War 2. In other year groups, some pupils work out how to present and collect data for a branching database and produce newspapers using a word processor and scanner. Opportunities are available for pupils to use digital cameras in their learning.
66. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The expertise of the co-ordinator is well used to support the staff, so teachers are confident in teaching ICT skills. The way forward is clear, but the current budgetary position is limiting the time available for the co-ordinator to see how effective other teachers are, and to manage developments. There has not yet been time to introduce the assessment system associated with the scheme of work. Recent thefts of equipment have resulted in limited opportunities for some pupils to practise the skills they learn within their classrooms. The school is re appraising this aspect of the provision in the light of improved security measures.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

67. Good use is made of ICT across the curriculum. Specialist software helps pupils improve their skills in reading and spelling. Data handling and the development of number skills are supported in mathematics. In a Year 6 science experiment, to evaluate the rate substances dissolved, good use was made of a spreadsheet to plot results. Pupils undertake effective research using CD-ROMs and the Internet for subjects such as history and geography, for example through researching information about the Tudors. Software is also well used to help pupils create artwork.

HUMANITIES

Religious education was not inspected because of the Voluntary Aided nature of the school. This will be inspected separately in a Section 23 inspection.

68. Only two lessons were observed in **history** and none in **geography** during the inspection. A sample of pupils' work was scrutinised. Topics covered in history and geography are taught on a two year cycle to help continuity and avoid duplication in Years 3 to 6, where there are mixed

age classes. New schemes of work are being developed, based on nationally recommended schemes.

69. The history curriculum provides good opportunities to develop literacy skills but these are very limited in geography due to the frequent use of work sheets which do not require extended writing. The school makes good use of the local area to study geography, and visitors, for example a former pupil of the school, help pupils develop their historical skills and knowledge. Pupils have visited Llandudno and the Imperial War Museum North. Manchester Airport has presented interesting opportunities in geography, enabling pupils to study travel, different destinations, including the Caribbean, and contrasting regions.
70. Pupils' work is carefully presented, particularly in history. Marking is encouraging and often, though not consistently, helpful in advising pupils how to improve.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Music, art and design, design technology and physical education were sampled.

71. No lessons were seen in either **music** or **design and technology** but teachers' planning documents, samples of pupils' work and assessment records were scrutinised. Coordinators for both these subjects, and art and design, carry several subject responsibilities, including the core subjects of English, mathematics and science and these subjects take priority, which has resulted in the development of the creative subjects being less dynamic. However, long term plans, and some samples of work in the creative subjects, indicate that the full programmes of study of the national curriculum are in place.
72. One good lesson was seen in **art and design**, in which pupils in Year 4 demonstrated good colour mixing techniques and the ability to paint in the style of Paul Gauguin. In this lesson the classroom assistant played a major role in the delivery of the lesson, giving encouragement and support to pupils, plus some direct teaching on how to get the best effects using paintbrushes. Pupils worked with concentration and their achievement was good. There are very few records of work in three dimensions, textiles or printing.
73. One satisfactory lesson was seen in **physical education** where Year 1 pupils practised safe ways to land when jumping from apparatus and different ways of travelling over and under the apparatus. The resource provision in physical education has improved a great deal since the last inspection. A new hall has been built and large equipment purchased, so that the school can now fulfil the national curriculum programmes of study within its own premises. Teachers are having additional training in delivering the curriculum and this has the potential to raise standards.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

74. This area was sampled, as no lessons were seen and so no overall judgement can be made on teaching or provision. Most of the school's personal, social and health education is taught within religious education and science lessons. Some classes choose to do 'circle time' where pupils can discuss any worries or personal celebrations they would like to share but this is an optional feature open to individual teachers. The ethos of the school promotes pupils' personal development, their respect for each other and their social development well and all staff are good role models for this aspect of their learning. There is a named governor, who liaises regularly with the coordinator, for this curriculum subject.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	3
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	3
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
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	4
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	4
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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