

# INSPECTION REPORT

**St John's CE Primary School**

Swinton

LEA area: Salford

Unique reference number: 105929

Headteacher: Mr A. Sadler

Lead inspector: Mr P. Martin

Dates of inspection: 28<sup>th</sup> June – 1<sup>st</sup> July 2004

Inspection number: 257726

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 Controlled  
Age range of pupils: 3 – 11 years  
Gender of pupils: Mixed  
Number on roll: 227

School address: Daisy Bank Avenue  
Swinton  
Salford  
Postcode: M27 5FU

Telephone number: 0161 737 4622  
Fax number: 0161 743 8487

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body  
Name of chair of governors: Mr C. Musgrave

Date of previous inspection: 23<sup>rd</sup> March 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- St John's Church of England Primary School is an average-sized school catering for 227 boys and girls aged three to 11.
- Most pupils come from a white British background.
- A small number of pupils have a range of different ethnic backgrounds.
- At the time of the inspection, no pupils were at an early stage of learning English.
- The percentage of pupils with special educational needs, about four per cent, is well below the national average.
- The percentage of pupils with statements of special educational needs, at under one per cent, is lower than the national average.
- The percentage of pupils who have free school meals, about 18 per cent, is similar to the national average.
- Pupil's socio-economic backgrounds are below average.
- Pupils' attainment on entry is below average.
- The number of pupils leaving and joining the school at other than the usual times last year was high.
- The school received a 'Healthy Schools' award in 2002.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
23262	Mr P. Martin	Lead inspector	Science Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology
13895	Mrs A. Smith	Lay inspector	
22452	Mrs M. Farman	Team inspector	Special educational needs, English Geography History Music Physical education
29188	Mrs G. Ulyatt	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Mathematics Personal, social and health education Religious education

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

This **successful** school provides **very good** value for money. Pupils start school with below average attainment and they achieve well because of the good quality of education. Leadership and management are very good and sharply focused on continually improving and maintaining standards.

#### The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The headteacher, senior management team and governors form a very effective team which consistently reflects on and reviews its practice.
- Pupils achieve well and most reach above-average standards in English, mathematics, science and religious education.
- Links with the community, especially the church, are very good and make a positive contribution to pupils' personal and academic development.
- Some teachers do not always insist on high enough standards of behaviour and presentation.
- Supervision at lunchtimes and playtimes does not always ensure the highest standards of care.
- Despite the school's good efforts, pupils' attendance is below average.

There has been a good degree of improvement since the last inspection. All the key issues of that report have been successfully dealt with. At that time, standards in information and communication technology at the end of Year 6 were below those expected. They are now similar to those expected. The school now implements guidelines for teaching that help to ensure that teachers have detailed guidance on what is to be taught. Very good leadership and management have helped to ensure that there is good progress throughout the school, and governance is now very good. As well as improvements in these areas, standards in English and religious education are now better than they were. The school has successfully re-established a strong teaching team following the promotion of a number of teachers to posts in other schools since the last inspection.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*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**. Children start in the nursery with below average standards overall and attain the goals they are expected to reach by the end of reception in all the prescribed areas of learning. Pupils continue to achieve well and, by the end of Year 2, standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science are above average. Last year, results of National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 were below average in English and science. That year, a greater number of pupils had barriers to learning, including special educational needs and poor behaviour. These had an adverse impact on test results. This year, the overwhelming majority of pupils at the end of Year 6 are working at the expected Level 4 in English, mathematics and science, and a greater than average number have reached the higher Level 5. In religious education, pupils reach higher than expected standards. Boys and girls perform equally well, as do the few pupils from ethnic minority groups. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and they make good progress towards their targets. No pupils are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language.

The school makes **good** provision for pupils' personal development. Their spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is **good**. Most pupils have **good** attitudes and behave well. They show a good level of maturity and responsibility, although a small number do not demonstrate positive attitudes consistently enough. This sometimes results in unsatisfactory behaviour and untidy work.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The quality of education is **good**. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school and this leads to good learning, resulting in a good level of achievement. The school provides a good range of curricular opportunities, enriched by a good range of activities in and out of normal school hours. The school has good links with parents and very good links with the local community. The school's links with the church are very good and there are good links with other schools and colleges that benefit the quality of education provided and have a positive impact on pupils' achievement.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are **very good**. The headteacher provides very good leadership and has built an effective team of teachers and other members of staff. This results in a good ethos for learning in which pupils' education and achievement are central to the school's work. The governing body fully meets statutory requirements and offers a very good level of challenge and support based on a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.

## **PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

Parents and pupils are pleased with the school. Very few parents expressed any concerns, either through the questionnaire or at the pre-inspection meeting. Most said they were happy with the standards achieved and the quality of education and care provided. The inspection team supports these views. Parents rightly feel that their children make good progress. Pupils are happy at school.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Ensure that all teachers consistently apply the school's behaviour management policies and demand higher standards of presentation of work.
- Improve levels of supervision at lunchtimes and playtimes.
- Work with parents to improve pupils' attendance.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

#### **Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects**

Boys and girls of all ability levels achieve **well** from the time they start school in the nursery to when they leave at the end of Year 6. At the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics and science is **above average**. By the end of Year 6, standards of attainment in English, mathematics and science are also **above average**. Standards in religious education are above those expected by the end of Year 6. Girls and boys perform equally well in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6. Pupils from different ethnic groups achieve as well as their classmates. No pupils are at an early stage of speaking English as an additional language. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve well in English, mathematics, science and religious education and reach above average standards in these subjects by the time they leave the school.
- Pupils who have special educational needs achieve well in relation to their starting points.

#### **Commentary**

##### **Foundation Stage**

1. When children start in the nursery and reception classes, their experiences of learning are below those for the age group nationally. Children achieve well because of the good quality of education they receive. By the time they start school in Year 1, they have reached the Early Learning Goals<sup>1</sup> in personal, social and emotional development; communications, language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; creative development and physical development.

##### **Key Stage 1**

2. The improvement in the school's average points<sup>2</sup> score for reading, writing and mathematics has been greater than the national trend. This stems from the good quality of education that children receive. In National Curriculum tests in 2003, boys and girls in Year 2 performed similarly in reading, writing and mathematics. Teachers judged that the percentage of pupils reaching the expected level in science was similar to the national average and that for similar schools.

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<sup>1</sup> Early learning goals - these are expectations for most children to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage. They refer mainly to achievements children make in connection with personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development. There are many goals for each area of learning. For example, in language and literacy children should be able to write their own name and other things such as labels and begin to write simple sentences.

<sup>2</sup> The average points score provides schools with a single statistic to compare the overall grades attained by all of their children with the grades attained by children in another school as well as an average for all schools nationally. The National Curriculum level attained by each pupil, for example, in mathematics, is given a score. A Level 1 = 9 points, a Level 2 = 15 points, Level 3 = 21 points and so on. Therefore, the average points score in mathematics is worked out by adding up all of the points based on the level attained by children and then dividing by the number of children who took the test. This means that a school whose average points score for mathematics in the end of Year 2 national tests is greater than 15.0 is one whose children are performing above that expected for their age. The average points score for Level 4, the nationally expected level for children at the end of Year 6 is 27.

**Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2003<sup>3</sup>**

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.7 (16.5)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	16.4 (15.1)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	17.0 (18.5)	16.3 (16.5)

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

Inspection findings show that, this year, standards of attainment are above those expected in reading, writing, mathematics and science because of the good quality of education the pupils receive.

## Key Stage 2

**Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003<sup>4</sup>**

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.5 (27.9)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	27.2 (28.3)	26.8 (26.7)
science	27.5 (28.8)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 35 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

Results of the National Curriculum tests for Year 6 children in 2003 show that pupils' performance, in relation to all schools nationally, was:

- well below the national average in English,
- similar to the national average in mathematics,
- below the national average in science.

In relation to schools with similar prior attainment, these pupils' performance was:

- well below average in English and science,
  - similar to the national average in mathematics.
3. The trend in the school's average points scores has been below the national trend over the last five years. This is because there are considerable year-on-year fluctuations in the ability of the different year groups that go through the school. Last year, for example, nearly 20 per cent of Year 6 pupils had special educational needs. A small but significant number had behaviour problems and a larger than average number had joined the class at other than the usual times. This had the effect of reducing overall performance scores.
  4. Inspection findings are that standards attained are above average for English, mathematics and science and religious education. This is because the present Year 6 children have been taught well and most have more positive attitudes to learning. These results reflect good levels of achievement because children start school in the nursery and reception classes with below average experiences of learning. Standards in information and communication technology are similar to what they should be by the time children leave school at the end of Year 6. This represents a satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection.

<sup>3</sup> Comparative data for 2004 was not available at the time of the inspection.

<sup>4</sup> Comparative data for 2004 was not available at the time of the inspection.

5. The standards of most pupils with special educational needs are below those expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. However, they make good progress and achieve well from a low baseline.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

Pupils have good **attitudes** to school. Most behave **well** at work and at play. Their personal development is good. Pupils' punctuality is satisfactory but their attendance is unsatisfactory. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good**.

### **Strengths and weaknesses**

- Most pupils have good attitudes to learning. However, some pupils sometimes demonstrate unsatisfactory attitudes.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good.
- Pupils have good relationships with each other and other adults.
- Despite the school's good efforts, attendance is consistently below national expectations.

### **Commentary**

6. The positive attitudes and behaviour noted at the last inspection are still in evidence. Pupils are interested in school life and the range of activities offered. This has a positive impact on their learning as they usually participate fully in lessons. Pupils generally show respect for each other and for the adults in school. Pupils, including those from different ethnic backgrounds, play and work happily with each other. Children in the nursery and reception classes settle happily into school routines and quickly adopt good attitudes to school and learning.
7. Overall, behaviour is good. The majority of pupils behave well in lessons, particularly in the mornings, and in the younger pupils' classes. The school has clear expectations for pupils to behave well but in some lessons, particularly in Years 5 and 6, pupils' attitudes to work were unsatisfactory. When teachers used the school's behaviour policy, the negative impact of this behaviour was greatly reduced. However, on occasions, the policy was not properly applied so misbehaviour continued and learning was hindered. Pupils behave well in assemblies and at playtimes and are clear that the school deals effectively with bullying, should it occur.
8. Pupils are keen to become involved in helping in school and conscientious in undertaking tasks set for them by the school, for example, by becoming representatives on the school council. Pupils are happy to take on responsibility and many, particularly the older pupils, take on duties at playtimes and lunch times. The majority of pupils declare they like their school and many are members of school clubs and take part in the sporting activities.
9. The school encourages pupils to become good citizens, and the personal, social and health education programme has a positive input into this aspect of pupils' development. The school works hard and successfully to promote good relationships throughout the school. Staff provide constant guidance to help pupils distinguish right from wrong and encourage them to value each other's efforts. They prompt pupils to discuss and reflect on the impact of their actions and matters that are troubling them, and this helps to raise their self-esteem and respect for themselves and each other.
10. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Spiritual development is very good. The school helps pupils to develop beliefs and values, particularly those of care and respect. There is very good provision for spiritual development, enhanced through the school's very good links with the vicar and the parish church of St John's. School assemblies and lessons, particularly in religious education, give pupils good opportunities to reflect on both the beliefs and practices of their own religion and those of other world faiths. The provision for the

pupils' cultural development is good and they learn to appreciate their own cultural and religious traditions through lessons, activities and visits.

11. Provision for pupils' moral and social development is good and has a significant positive impact on their attitudes and behaviour. School rules are displayed in classrooms and are understood by pupils, so behaviour is good. However, some older pupils are not always willing to abide by them on all occasions. Teachers generally provide good role models, and good moral messages are conveyed clearly. The school fosters the social development of its pupils by promoting feelings of self-worth and a sense of community with common and inclusive values.
12. The school's systems to support pupils with special educational needs are successful in giving them personal and academic consistency and security. As a result, they develop positive attitudes to themselves, each other, adults and learning. All pupils with special educational needs have and take good opportunities to carry out duties in the classroom and around the school. For instance, they sort and distribute fruit as part of the healthy schools initiative. This develops their awareness of others' needs and increases their self-value.

## Attendance

### *Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)*

Authorised absence	
School data:	6.9%
National data:	5.4%

Unauthorised absence	
School data :	0.4%
National data:	0.4%

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

13. Attendance is unsatisfactory and well below the national average. This represents a decline in attendance since the previous inspection. However, unauthorised absence is similar to the national average. The overall low rate of attendance is mainly due to poor attendance by a small number of children whose parents take them away from school for days off and holidays during term time. The school is working closely with the Educational Welfare Officer to deal with these attendance problems, and supports parents and carers well in encouraging the regular attendance of all pupils. Most arrive in good time for the beginning of the school day and are ready to begin lessons promptly.

## Exclusions in the last school year

### *Ethnic background of pupils*

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British

### *Exclusions in the last school year*

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
169		1

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

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is **good**. The quality of teaching and learning, and of the curriculum, is **good**. Assessment is **good**. The school cares for, guides and supports pupils

**well.** It has **good** links with parents, **very good** links with the community and **good** partnerships with other schools and colleges.

**Teaching and learning**

The quality of teaching provided by the school is **good** throughout the school, leading to a **good** quality of learning for all pupils. The use of assessment procedures to raise standards of attainment and improve achievement is **good**.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is good, leading to good quality of learning.
- Teachers plan lessons that engage children’s interest and help them to achieve well.
- Support assistants offer good support.
- Teachers’ expectations for behaviour and presentation are not always high enough.
- Assessment procedures are used very well in English.

**Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 38 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	4 (11%)	26 (68%)	7 (18%)	1 (3%)	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.*

**Commentary**

14. As at the time of the last inspection, the quality of teaching is good. The table above shows that, whilst the teaching in the majority of lessons was good, there were a number of very good lessons, and only one unsatisfactory one. A number of key features contribute to the good quality of teaching across the school. The very good leadership and management of the school have a positive impact on the quality of both teaching and learning.
  
15. Teachers have a good understanding of the subjects they teach and match this understanding well to pupils’ interests and abilities, so that they learn well. In Year 2, the teacher used effective strategies and resources so that pupils made good progress in telling the time. Teachers plan effectively, with clear purposes to the lesson, which they share with the class. This helps pupils to concentrate on what they are learning. Teachers plan series of lessons that fit well together, which also enhances learning. For example, Year 4 pupils had used information and communication technology skills to find out about aboriginal art before they painted their own pictures. Teachers use questioning well to gauge levels of understanding and to help pupils to consolidate what they have already learned. In a Year 1 literacy lesson, the teacher asked pupils questions about the book, *Farmer Duck*, ensuring that the more able were challenged by more difficult questions. As a result, these pupils made inferences about what might happen, rather than ‘just’ answering questions about the story. Teachers encourage pupils to use the skills and knowledge learned in one subject to learning in others. In Year 3, pupils used literacy skills well when composing e-mails in information and communication technology. Teachers have a good understanding of pupils’ ability and plan group and individual work that matches this. For example, in a Year 5 information and communication technology lesson, pupils succeeded in recording and displaying temperature as graphs. They could interpret this information because the teachers’ good use of prepared resources took account of pupils’ knowledge and understanding in mathematics. Teachers make good use of classroom support assistants. In a Year 4 English lesson, a small group of pupils working with a learning support assistant made good progress in reading for understanding and expression. Most teachers have high expectations that pupils will learn and behave well, and the overwhelming majority do. However, teachers occasionally do not use these strategies effectively. In an unsatisfactory Year 6 French lesson, for example, a small

number of pupils were openly disobedient. The teacher did not use behaviour management strategies well enough, so their misbehaviour had an adverse impact on their learning and that of the rest of the class.

16. Teachers have a good understanding about pupils' competence in literacy and use this information well to match work to their ability. This helps pupils take a full part in lessons. For example, in science, teachers use worksheets that help pupils to record the important features of their work, whilst still requiring them to use literacy and scientific recording skills. The quality of marking is good overall. In many cases, teachers use marking well to tell pupils how well they have done and what they need to do to improve. Occasionally, marking is not as useful, for example, when mathematics is marked without such useful advice and guidance. In too many cases, teachers do not demand a high enough standard of neatness, with the result that untidiness sometimes hampers learning.
17. The very good and sensitive support for pupils with special educational needs enables them to achieve well and grow in self-esteem. It ensures that most teaching takes place in the classrooms, with provision for withdrawal sessions when necessary. This ensures that these pupils take as full a part in lessons as possible, with a positive impact on their learning. Teachers and other staff work very closely together and regular, systematic reviews of pupils' achievement help to ensure that work meets their specific needs. All staff have immediate access to the specified targets for pupils with special educational needs. The clear and easy to follow targets are discussed with pupils and parents and are understood by staff.
18. The school uses a battery of tests well to gauge pupils' progress in English and mathematics. Teachers use the result of these tests very well in English to set targets for individuals and groups of pupils. However, although procedures for assessing pupils' progress in mathematics are good, they are not used to the same extent in setting targets. Assessment and its use are satisfactory in other subjects, including religious education. There has been a satisfactory degree of improvement since the last inspection in that assessment systems are used at least satisfactorily to inform planning of lessons and groups of lessons.

## The curriculum

The school offers a **good** range of worthwhile curriculum opportunities. The curriculum includes **good** opportunities for enrichment. The school's accommodation and resources are **satisfactory**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The planned curriculum meets the needs of all pupils well.
- The school provides a good range of activities during the school day and outside lessons.
- Provision for outdoor play for nursery children is good, but reception class children do not have the same facilities.
- The accommodation for teaching music is unsatisfactory.

## Commentary

19. The Foundation Stage curriculum provides a good range of activities that promote good achievement in all six areas of learning. The curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 6 is good and fully meets statutory requirements. The school uses the National Numeracy and Literacy strategies well, and teachers use government recommended guidelines to support planning and teaching in other subjects. This has helped to overcome the weaknesses in planning noted in the last inspection. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good and pays due attention to keeping healthy and safe, the dangers of substance abuse and sex education. The curriculum forms a firm basis for pupils' good achievement and is enriched by an extensive range of activities during and outside lessons. Older pupils benefit from a residential visit to Shropshire, where many experience living away from home for the first time. Pupils of all ages benefit from the lessons taken by the local vicar in religious education and

visits to the church. Pupils visit places of local interest, and this enhances their learning opportunities. For example, when studying Judaism, pupils in Year 3 visit the Jewish Museum and the school invites a Jewish visitor to support teaching and to advise staff on details about the Jewish faith. This ensures pupils' learning is accelerated and subsequent planning takes good account of these experiences. Pupils visit the theatre and local museums to support learning in subjects, such as history and geography.

20. There is a good range of after-school clubs and activities in which pupils develop their skills in team games, healthy cooking, art and French. The school takes part in an inter-school football league. This helps to enhance pupils' social and moral development as well as contributing to pupils' physical development. The curriculum is further enhanced by the good links with the church and through taking part in concerts, performances and music workshops. The school places good emphasis on music and a high percentage of pupils take advantage of peripatetic music tuition from visiting teachers. The school makes sure that pupils who attend additional activities such as music tuition during the school day do not regularly miss the same lessons, so do not hamper their learning in the lessons they miss. Pupils also join groups, such as the chess and journalist clubs, which foster their interest in these activities well. They join the computer club and extend their information and communication technology skills.
21. The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs. It gives all pupils with special educational needs full access to the National Curriculum and all out-of-school activities. The school takes pupils' identified needs and the Code of Practice into account when planning work. This helps to ensure that these pupils achieve as well as their classmates.
22. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory, although some teaching areas are very open, and classes are sometimes disturbed by the flow of other pupils or noise from other areas. The computer suite is a useful development since the last inspection and has helped to improve provision in information and communication technology. The music room is not used to full advantage. It is cluttered, has no windows and is airless. Music lessons are sometimes disturbed because adults use the photocopying machine that is kept in the room. This means that it is not as useful a resource for teaching and learning in music that it might otherwise be. Children in the nursery benefit from good outdoor facilities and have immediate access to the secure area outdoors. Those in the reception class have good, immediate access to an outdoor area, but the facilities and space are more restricted, so there are some missed opportunities for teachers to ensure that all areas of learning are provided for outdoors.

### Care, guidance and support

The school has **good** provision for promoting the care, welfare, health and safety of pupils. The support and advice given to pupils is **good**. The involvement of children through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is **very good**.

### Strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers know pupils well and provide good quality support for them.
- The school is very active in seeking, valuing and acting on pupils' views.
- There are some weaknesses in the provision of supervision during breaks and lunch times.
- Most pupils have a good and trusting relationship with one or more adults in the school.

### Commentary

23. The school offers good quality care and support. This helps pupils to feel secure in school, and enables most of them to concentrate well during lessons and to achieve good standards. Some members of staff are trained to deal with medical and welfare needs of pupils when these arise, and teaching staff are vigilant about the pupils in their care. All members of staff are aware of child protection procedures and effectively support the headteacher in this aspect

of care. Pupils are generally well supervised during lessons but some weaknesses in the standards of provision for outside supervision for the older pupils were observed during inspection at break and lunch times. Annual risk assessments are now undertaken and the recording of minor accidents is satisfactory. This represents satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.

24. Praise and encouragement for pupils' academic and personal achievements are high priorities and teachers foster the development of personal and social skills well. The school's good assessment procedures are used well to support pupils' learning. The school takes pupils' views seriously and is good at involving them in putting forward ideas and developing projects in school, for example through the school council. All staff work hard to develop and maintain the good relationships observed in the school community.
25. All members of staff work very hard to give pupils with special educational needs the skills to relate well to each other and adults, and to develop positive social attitudes. The detailed records of pupils' progress in emotional development, learning skills and personal conduct give a clear overview of needs. Teachers and support assistants use the findings to plan work that gives good support to pupils' personal, social and academic needs.

### **Partnership with parents, other schools and the community**

The school has **good** partnerships with parents and other schools and **very good** links with the church and local community.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school works hard to promote quality partnerships with parents.
- The school is keen to involve parents and actively seeks and values their views.
- The school has very constructive links with the church and the local community.

### **Commentary**

26. The school has a good relationship with parents. They know they are welcome to come in to school and discuss matters that may affect their children. Parents appreciate the school's welcoming environment and the headteacher deals with concerns or complaints immediately. At the pre-inspection meeting for parents and in their responses to the questionnaire canvassing their views, parents were very positive about the way the school looks after their children. Many parents and carers offer support to the school and are pleased with what the school provides for their children. The school readily seeks, listens to and acts on the views of individual parents. Parents are enthusiastic in attending events that involve their children, such as class assemblies, sports day and school performances. They are willing to help in school and with transporting pupils to events outside school. In this way, parents and carers effectively support pupils' personal development and help to broaden the scope of their educational experiences. The active 'Friends of St John's' arranges many social and fundraising activities for parents and pupils, and the school has benefited greatly from monies raised to support the school's work. Parents are kept well informed about school activities and are kept up-to-date about their children's development through parents' meetings and comprehensive annual reports. The majority are involved to some extent with their children's work at home.
27. There are productive links with the parish church and local community. For example, the independent Daisy Club uses the school to provide care for pupils from different schools before and after school hours and during school holidays. The church and school share a useful agreement with the school to provide regular timetabled visits to support religious education, assemblies and pupils' personal development. The school has valuable links with other local primary schools and curricular links with the local secondary school to support pupils' move into their next school. For example, during the inspection week, pupils from Years

5 and 6 visited partner secondary schools. These activities help to smooth pupils' transition from one school to another. The school makes an effective contribution to the initial training of teachers and is involved in projects with the physical education department at a local college. These initiatives further enrich pupils' experiences by giving them valuable insights into the wider world.

28. The close involvement of parents whose children have special educational needs gives parents a clear understanding of how well their children are doing. Strong links with outside agencies ensure all members of staff have a high level of support. This helps staff to provide resources that meet individual needs.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are **very good**. The headteacher provides **very good** leadership and is ably supported by the deputy headteacher and senior management team. The governance of the school is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher is fully committed to continual improvement. His leadership enables subject managers to fulfil their roles very well.
- The school is very effective in creating staff teams so that all feel valued.
- Very effective induction procedures support new staff so that they settle quickly and contribute well.
- The school is very self-evaluative, identifies areas for development and plans improvements very effectively.
- Governors have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development, and are very closely involved in strategic planning.
- Finances are managed very efficiently and the school has strategies in place to reduce the current deficit budget.

### **Commentary**

29. The headteacher provides very good leadership. He is fully committed to continual improvement in all areas of the school's work and is very clear-sighted and caring in leading the school. Subject leaders lead and manage their subjects so the curriculum gives a good balance across all subjects. The headteacher, with very strong support from his very effective deputy and senior management team, maintains a secure overview of what is happening in the school.
30. The headteacher recognises that the staff are his most valuable resource. Adults in the school have a strong sense of common purpose and a full commitment to its good ethos. This helps to ensure that all pupils try to achieve the best they can academically and develop into confident and caring young people, able to lead purposeful lives. The school's very good commitment to equality for all its pupils is increasingly enabling them to achieve well. A contributory factor is that all adults in the school feel valued and part of a team that contributes to planning and teaching the curriculum. Professional development at all levels puts teachers and other adults in a very strong position to make improvements. In addition, the school introduces new staff to its systems and expectations very carefully and sensitively. They quickly gain confidence as members of the school's team. The school also makes a positive contribution to initial teacher training and gives student teachers valuable experiences for their future careers. All these elements contribute very effectively to pupils' learning and achievement.
31. The school is very evaluative of its own work. Systems are in place for all subject leaders to monitor and evaluate the progress of their subject and standards achieved, and to plan for

further developments. The headteacher has a very good ability to identify the school's needs and to plan to meet them systematically. For example, he quickly realised that the management of behaviour is a key factor in enabling the school to move forward. As a result, the school has made considerable progress in this area, but there is still room for further progress, particularly in the upper part of the school. The headteacher's very clear grasp of long-term strategy means that he is able to plan very well for the school's development. This helps to ensure that a wide range of initiatives contributes to the common goal of improving pupils' all-round education. The school improvement plan is carefully thought through, after wide consultation. Its objectives are clear, relevant to the school's needs and manageable. There is regular and systematic monitoring and evaluating of progress towards the identified priorities.

32. Governors form a very strong part of the team. Their shrewd and experienced chair ensures all governors are closely involved in strategic development and the management of the school's finances. They have a very good appreciation of the school's strengths and potential for development, and monitor the school's performance very rigorously. This is a very significant improvement since the previous inspection. Governors ensure that the school complies with legal requirements and that the principles of best value are applied very carefully and effectively.
33. The budget is managed very carefully and prudently. All spending decisions focus on raising standards. The school has had to set a deficit budget, with the approval of the local education authority, for the coming year. The deficit is no fault of the school or the governing body. For example, a fall in the number of pupils has resulted in the amount the school receives and there has also been a severe cut in the budget allocated to the school. This has resulted in an increasing deficit over the last two years. The governors have considered different ways of reducing this and have already taken difficult but necessary decisions and have very clear plans, including staff redundancy, to reduce the deficit whilst maintaining high quality education for all pupils

## Financial information

### *Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003*

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	554,718	Balance from previous year	-34,835
Total expenditure	621,612	Balance carried forward to the next	-48,245
Expenditure per pupil	2,714		

34. The headteacher's very good leadership has enabled good improvement since the previous inspection. All the issues from that inspection have been successfully dealt with. The school is in a strong position to improve further and gives very good value for money.

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

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

35. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage has been well maintained since the previous inspection. Teaching is good overall. The range of experiences children have before starting school is varied but, overall, when children enter the nursery, their level of attainment is below what is normally expected. Children achieve well in both the nursery and the reception class and, by the time they enter Year 1, the majority are likely to achieve the goals they are expected to reach in all areas of learning. Leadership in the Foundation Stage is good. The co-ordinator is working hard to bring about improvements. She has a clear vision and leads well by example.

### **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children play well together, taking turns and sharing equipment.
- Children are confident, express their feelings and show care for others.
- There are not enough planned opportunities for independent play in the reception class.

#### **Commentary**

36. Teaching is good and children achieve well. Parents are welcomed into each class to share news about their children with staff. They stay to help settle their child whenever they wish. If children arrive late in the nursery, they are greeted enthusiastically and this makes them feel that their presence is valued. All children are polite and well behaved. They enjoy taking part in all the activities offered. They play well together outdoors, sharing the equipment and resources, and manage to devise rules for the 'ice hockey' game without direct support. Staff provide a good range of activities, such as drawing vegetables from direct observation. In reception, children show good levels of maturity. They are clear about routines and know how to collect their work, pencils, write their name at the top of the page and wait quietly for the teacher. Children are confident and staff are good caring role models. They make good use of puppets to encourage children to express their feelings. All children show care for their friends and play amicably together. They show pride in their work. Throughout the Foundation Stage, lesson and activity planning contain clear learning objectives. However, activities from which children can choose are limited in the reception class because the accommodation is not organised well enough, and some activities encroach on others. There is no clear, designated area for children to take part in role-play activities. The area outside the reception class is not adequate to provide an outdoor curriculum covering all six areas. This restricts independent learning through play.

### **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children achieve well because staff adopt a systematic approach to teaching basic reading and writing skills through a range of practical activities.

- Staff assess children as they work with them so that they can provide activities that are well-matched to their learning needs.

### **Commentary**

37. Children enjoy their activities and achieve well because teaching is good and staff make learning interesting. Reception children play word lotto games, so they learn to read new words, and staff help them to write the ending to a sentence. More able children know about capital letters and full stops. In the nursery, several play-activities promote writing. Children are encouraged to 'mark the register' and to write their name. Children are good listeners and take great notice of what the puppets say to them. They know many songs and rhymes from memory and staff teach them new words, such as the names of the animals going into the ark. Books are also used well to improve speaking skills. One child read a story from the pictures and used the phrase '...it's a wonderful day...' in a suitable context. Children play well in role and adults support them well, for example, when they pretend to be firemen. All children show interest in books and know how to handle them correctly. Some reception children use their knowledge of letter sounds to help identify new words in books. Teachers provide good support for handwriting by providing many different writing tools, and by ensuring that reception children have their own alphabet lines to help with letter formation. Staff assess children during activities so teachers are clear about what children know and can do. They use this important information to group children and to support and challenge them according to their stage of development.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **good** and has improved since the previous report.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children make good progress in number recognition and early counting skills.
- Skilled teaching encourages children to concentrate well.

### **Commentary**

38. Children achieve well because staff emphasise the teaching of early number skills and mental work. In the nursery, staff encourage children to count through play and, because the current topic is about growing, children count peas and beans, and play dice games during which they have to climb up the beanstalk. They make repeating patterns, using pegs and boards. In reception, some children recognise numbers to 20. They learn positional words well when 'hunting for treasure' outside. They build tall towers with cylinders and paint animals with patterned coats. This helps them to recognise shapes and to begin to understand pattern. Children learn to form numbers correctly and are beginning to work out simple calculations from pictures. Teachers are good at motivating children to learn. They teach reception children how to work out numbers that are one more or one less than a given number. Staff make learning fun in the nursery by encouraging clapping, and cheering when children identify the correct number.

## **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children find out why things happen and how things work.
- Children make good progress in learning computer skills.
- Opportunities to promote aspects of this area outdoors are less well planned.

## Commentary

39. Teaching is good because staff plan interesting activities to encourage children to be curious. Children achieve well. They find out that jelly melts in warm water. They have good practical cooking sessions in the nursery where they make beans on toast, thus learning how bread changes when heated. Some know that the toaster works with electricity. In the reception class, they learn that cream comes from cows and how to change it into butter by churning it themselves. They benefit from sessions in the computer suite. Children develop computer skills through a range of games which support number, literacy and art. Most control the mouse well, use the arrow keys and learn to find the letters for their name. Children play with construction equipment and, in the nursery, they make a castle for the giant and are beginning to stagger the bricks to make the walls strong. Children develop a sense of the school community when they go to whole school assemblies. The area outdoors is attractive, with natural surroundings. At times, too little use is made of this area to further enhance children's knowledge and understanding of the world.

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well because they have regular access to challenging equipment outdoors.

## Commentary

40. Teaching is good and children achieve well. Children master the art of using hockey sticks to move balls. They learn to control vehicles by increasing the speed and slowing down. They roll tyres, run vigorously and generally have fun outside. Reception children use the hall for gymnastics lessons, and photographs show they learn to balance on apparatus and jump off safely. Children develop good eye-to-hand co-ordination when, for example, making patterns with pegs and manipulating dough. They use brushes, glue spreaders and pencils with increasing control. Children develop a satisfactory awareness of a healthy lifestyle. For example, they learn about healthy snacks, choose whether to wear a jacket or not when playing outside, and they know to wash their hands after using the toilet and before working with food.

## CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides an extensive range of resources and activities leading to good achievement.

## Commentary

41. Teaching is good and children achieve well. The indoor areas are bright and visually stimulating for young children. There is a very good variety of creative materials, and adults encourage children to experiment for themselves. Children paint spontaneously, mixing colours and comparing new hues created. They draw well and with detail, and talk about their work with confidence and pride. For example, one child described the crocodile in the river and the girl sitting on a large stone next to it. Children make collage pictures and work with dough. They eat bread spread with their home-made butter or their own baked beans on toast, all with great pleasure. Children enjoy singing and musical instruments are always available for them.

Role-play scenarios change so children develop their imagination because of good staff interaction. For example, nursery children in the area outdoors enjoy creating a 'movie script,' with good staff support. They love to play inside tents, developing their ideas, and they enjoy dressing up and pretending.

## **SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2**

### **ENGLISH AND FRENCH**

#### **English**

Provision in English is **good**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve well and standards exceed expectations throughout the school.
- The consistently good quality teaching and learning ensure pupils enjoy their work.
- Pupils use their literacy skills effectively in many other subjects.
- Not all pupils take enough care over presenting their work neatly and carefully.
- The systems for checking pupils' progress and achievements are very good.
- The information about what pupils can and cannot do is used well to plan suitable work.
- Very strong leadership and teamwork give all pupils varied and interesting work.

#### **Commentary**

42. Pupils' performance in the 2003 national tests in Year 6 was well below average in English. This was also the case in the comparisons with results of pupils in similar schools and in relation to their prior attainment. However, inspection evidence supports the school's view that standards in the current Year 6 are much better. Achievement for these pupils is now good. It is better than that of the previous year because of the specialist teaching and very effective support for pupils with special educational needs.
43. Overall, standards in the current Year 2 are above those expected. Almost all pupils reach the expected level for their age, with a suitably high proportion reaching a higher level. This is good achievement because many of these pupils entered the school with language skills below expectations for their age. The very effective teaching and planning for pupils with special educational needs ensure they achieve well.
44. The quality of teaching and learning is good. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed during the inspection and some was very good, notably in Years 1 and 6. One of the strongest features is the very good relationships these teachers have with their pupils. This enables them to control behaviour and avoid delays in pupils' learning. There is good use of additional adults in the classroom, whether teachers or support assistants. This ensures that all abilities, including the more able pupils, receive high quality encouragement to achieve their best. For example, comments about pupils' reading provide them with clear and supportive advice on how they can improve. All classrooms have a wide variety of print on display, hand-written and word-processed, which encourages pupils to read and introduces them to a variety of writing styles. Teachers provide good examples for reading and writing that enable pupils to learn well. They ask probing questions that challenge pupils to think more deeply and to find answers by referring to the text. Expectations about the content of pupils' work are high. For instance, by Year 6, many pupils write lengthy and interesting pieces of fiction. However, there is not enough insistence on all pupils presenting their work carefully, neatly and legibly. This makes it difficult to read some work and restricts pupils' achievement. A strong feature of teaching in all classes is marking. This encourages pupils and gives them clear indications of how they can improve their work.

45. All teachers make effective use of the structures provided by the National Literacy Strategy to develop reading and writing skills across the school. However, the development of the skills of speaking and listening is not quite as well structured. This, and the fact that some classrooms are thoroughfares to others, limits pupils' achievement in this aspect of English. However, the school has plans to develop and strengthen this area of learning in the coming year. The school library is adequate for older pupils to work independently to gain a range of research skills. Pupils know and understand the book classification system and use their knowledge when they go to the public library. The satisfactory increase in resources for computer technology gives pupils better opportunities to use computers to support learning in literacy lessons.
46. Good achievement in reading is promoted by good support from parents. This is evident from the comments in the home-school reading diaries. Pupils, even in Year 6, continue to read regularly to parents or other adults. They clearly enjoy and value reading. One pupil said, "I like reading because you can set an image in your mind and build on and change it." The school further promotes interest in reading by encouraging pupils to take part in reading challenges.
47. The systems for tracking pupils' achievement and progress are very good. They are very carefully structured and used consistently throughout the school. This ensures that all teachers have a clear picture of each individual and plan work that builds on and extends pupils' previous learning. The effective initiatives taken to raise standards are a result of the very good leadership and management of English. There has been a good degree of improvement since the previous inspection, when standards were similar to those found nationally. Following last year's low results, the school has placed a strong focus on improving writing. This is having a positive effect on standards and the impact is already in the process of thorough evaluation. The co-ordinator has regular time to monitor teaching, the work of pupils and to check teachers' assessments of achievement. This gives her a clear over-view of standards across the school and of areas that need a closer focus. For example, she has already identified the need to improve pupils' presentation. The school uses clear predictions of future performance to help set targets for pupils to achieve. As pupils move through the school, they become involved with setting their own targets and identifying what they need to do next. This increases their ability to be more responsible for own learning.

### **Language and literacy across the curriculum**

48. The school gives pupils good opportunities to increase the relevance of work in literacy by linking it to other subjects. For example, Year 6 work during the inspection, about the impact of a proposed racecourse in Manchester, linked well to work in geography and social skills. Pupils write interesting factual accounts of historical events such as the Great Fire of London but the unsatisfactory presentation of their work makes it difficult to read. They use their reading skills and computers very effectively to carry out research in other subjects. This increases their understanding of the importance of English in all areas of learning.

### **French**

49. Year 6 pupils learn some conversational French for a few weeks at the end of the year. A number of these pupils have previously attended French Club and so have a better grounding than the others. Most pupils know the French for numbers up to 20 and use a correct phrase for saying their names.

### **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The above average standards in mathematics have been well maintained since the previous inspection.
- Teachers plan interesting work and relevant activities and, consequently, pupils achieve well.
- There is a strong focus on developing pupils' mental skills
- There is good emphasis on problem solving
- The monitoring of teaching and learning is beginning to develop

## Commentary

50. Standards in mathematics are above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Performance in the 2003 national tests was similar to the national average and that for similar schools. In Year 2, all pupils reached the expected standard with almost a third achieving the higher level. Scrutiny of work and teacher assessment suggests that standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are above average. Most pupils enter the school with attainment levels in mathematics below those expected but, by Year 2, they achieve well by, for example, developing a good knowledge and understanding of place value and recalling addition and number facts to 100. By the end of Year 6, pupils add and subtract within 10,000. They multiply and divide numbers, showing good levels of accuracy. This represents consistently good achievement. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their targets.
51. Teaching is good. All adults working with pupils know them very well and pay good attention to the age and ability of each individual. Teachers demonstrate good questioning skills and challenge pupils, whose knowledge and understanding is very varied because of the differences in ability. Teachers plan activities that interest pupils and make mathematics relevant to them. In Year 2, pupils learn to read the time and are well motivated because some of them have watches of their own and see how useful it is to know when it is playtime or lunchtime.
52. Additional strengths in teaching include:
- carefully planned lessons with clear objectives, that make sure pupils fully understand how work builds on from previous learning;
  - provision of a good range of problems to be worked out mentally, covering many aspects of mathematics;
  - good emphasis on the correct use of mathematical vocabulary;
  - good opportunities for pupils to explain methods of calculation;
  - encouraging pupils to contribute ideas with no fear of failure;
  - class assistants who are well-briefed and very supportive of individual pupils;
  - questioning which is used well to check pupils' understanding.
53. Teachers give good emphasis to developing pupils' mental skills, and pupils achieve well. This is because teachers allocate time at the beginning of lessons to develop quick thinking in pupils across several aspects of mathematics. They plan several short activities to extend pupils' understanding and consolidate previous learning. Pupils have frequent mental mathematics tests and this improves their speed. Therefore, the range of pupils' use of mental calculations improves as they move up the school. Pupils in Year 3 multiply and divide large numbers by three and the teacher makes the exercise interesting by using real life situations. In Year 6, pupils are knowledgeable about calculating in 60's to support the use of minutes and seconds in their work.
54. Teachers place a good emphasis on problem solving. In Year 4, pupils have short problems to read and understand the variety of ways addition and multiplication are expressed. In Year 2, they have short scenarios to analyse, for example, involving animals with different numbers of legs. Pupils use their knowledge of number to find clear solutions to these problems. Pupils benefit from 'booster sessions' where they work in small groups with a member of staff. This consolidates their understanding, and all make good progress.

55. Leadership and management of mathematics are satisfactory. The co-ordinator is new in post and arrangements for monitoring teaching and learning are not fully established. The school is now beginning to track pupils' progress. Pupils' work is marked but there is inconsistency in its quality. Some marking offers useful advice and guidance, but at other times this is lacking. There is little information written in the books of some classes to help pupils understand where they need to improve, and pupils' work is untidy. Since the previous inspection, the use of computer programs in mathematics has increased. Pupils work on programs that test and record their achievements, and their progress is analysed. Pupils enjoy the tests and compete against their previous score.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

56. There are good links with other curriculum areas, including science and physical education. In Year 6, pupils collect data about their heart rate, the number of skips they can do without stopping and the time it takes to run a specified distance. Pupils record their findings to create graphs and charts onto paper and also use computers to do so. Pupils sometimes use mathematics as part of their work in other subjects and, consequently, develop an appreciation of the practical uses of these skills. For example, they use graphs to record data in geography and science.

### **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers plan good lessons that encourage good understanding in a wide range of scientific concepts, including scientific enquiry.
- Some pupils do not pay enough attention to the quality of their written work.

#### **Commentary**

57. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils reach above average standards of attainment. Most Year 6 pupils reach at least the expected level, Level 4. A greater than average number reach the higher Level 5. Inspection findings show that pupils' attainment is better than teachers' judgements at the end of Year 2 in 2003 and the results of National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 in the same year. In that year, a smaller proportion than nationally reached the expected levels. This year, a scrutiny of pupils' exercise books shows that they have covered a good range of work and that their knowledge and understanding are above average.
58. The quality of teaching is good. This results in good learning. Teachers plan effective lessons in which pupils learn about scientific 'facts' whilst undertaking investigations, thus learning enquiry skills as well as content. Year 2 pupils enjoyed working out how to make a bulb light whilst learning about circuits. This idea of learning knowledge through investigation was developed well in Year 4, when pupils used their knowledge of circuits to devise a way of finding out whether different materials are electrical conductors. In Year 6, a visiting teacher effectively developed pupils' understanding of fair testing through the use of an investigation planner that clarified the idea of changing only one variable when investigating the reaction of baking soda and vinegar. Teachers use supportive worksheets that encourage pupils to record their work systematically. This helps pupils with special educational needs to make good progress. However, pupils do not always realise that recording is an important part of the scientific process. This, coupled with the fact that some teachers do not always pay enough attention to encouraging neatness, means that too many pupils' work is sometimes untidy and difficult to read. This shows that some pupils do not have enough pride in their work, and this

reduces their quality of learning. However, other than this, the quality of marking is good and teachers offer useful advice and guidance to help pupils to develop their understanding.

59. Leadership and management are satisfactory and there has been a satisfactory degree of improvement since the last inspection. Assessment procedures are now satisfactory, but some of these are not used thoroughly enough. For example, the results of National Curriculum tests for Year 6 pupils in 2003 have not been analysed in order to identify what has been taught well and where improvements need to be made. There has been an improvement has been in the quality of the curriculum. The school uses government-recommended guidelines well to plan teaching in each year, and work is sufficiently challenging for all pupils. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to practise literacy skills, sometimes along with information and communication technology skills. In Year 6, pupils found information about Robert Koch, and incorporated this into a play about his discoveries. Younger pupils used their letter-writing skills to record their findings about plant growth. Pupils have satisfactory opportunities to use mathematical skills and take measurements when, for example, comparing weights of objects in air and water. Although pupils use information and communication technology when carrying out research, they do not use this enough for taking measurements, for example, of temperature or light levels. The school has only very recently acquired equipment for doing so. The subject makes a satisfactory contribution to personal, social and health education through teaching pupils about issues such as keeping healthy.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in information and communication technology is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There have been a number of improvements since the previous inspection.
- Teachers have a good understanding of how and what to teach.
- The computer suite is an effective resource.

### **Commentary**

60. By the end of Years 2 and 6, standards are similar to those expected from pupils of that age. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory.
61. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, leading to a satisfactory quality of learning. Teachers plan lessons that follow the government's recommended guidelines so pupils learn the required skills, building on what they have previously learned. Teachers are increasingly confident in teaching the subject. These, and the creation of a computer suite, have been major factors in bringing about this improvement. Teachers effectively use off-computer tasks to introduce concepts and use the computer suite well, so that all pupils are learning during lessons. For example, the teacher in Year 2 used a number-guessing game well to introduce pupils to the idea of distinguishing between two fruits by asking questions that could be answered 'yes' or 'no'. In Year 3, one teacher encouraged pupils in the classroom to use their literacy skills well when composing an invitation to be sent by e-mail. Meanwhile, another teacher, supported well by a classroom assistant, was using a safe web site to teach pupils how to send and receive their own e-mails.
62. Leadership and management are good. The subject co-ordinator has worked hard in improving provision through creating the suite, increasing teachers' confidence through continuing training and implementing guidelines for teaching. As a result, there has been a good degree of improvement since the last inspection, when there was little direct teaching of information and communication technology and no whole-school planning. This has resulted in improved standards. The school has very recently bought equipment for measuring temperature, sound and light levels, using computers. These factors have all meant that pupils now learn skills in all the required areas. Assessment is satisfactory. Each pupil has a portfolio of work which is a

useful record of the skills they have mastered. They also have a good understanding of how they are progressing because they are required to keep a record of their competence in the different areas.

### Information and communication technology across the curriculum

63. There are some good examples of the use of information and communication technology in teaching and learning about other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 6 create multimedia presentations about different world religions. This enhances their learning in religious education as well as in information and communication technology. Year 4 pupils use the Internet to research aboriginal art and this has a positive impact on their own work in that style. Year 6 pupils use desk-top publishing techniques to write newspaper articles, thus enhancing their literacy skills. Pupils learn to use spreadsheets, but seldom for purposes directly linked to their learning in mathematics. However, although the suite is used well, the constraints of the accommodation mean that there are not enough opportunities to use information and communication technology in the classroom.

### HUMANITIES

64. It is not possible to make a judgement about the school's overall provision in history and geography because there is not enough evidence to do so securely. Judgements in these subjects are based on the few lessons seen, a scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with pupils and teachers.
65. Only one lesson in **geography** and one in **history** were seen during the inspection. It is not, therefore, possible to make a secure judgement about the quality of teaching and learning in these subjects. Evidence consists of the lesson, pupils' work in books and talking with staff and pupils.
66. The lesson seen and pupils' work in their books show that pupils achieve standards in **geography** that meet those expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This is evident in pupils' understanding of the impact of climate and humans on the environment. It reflects the findings of the previous inspection. Visits to the local area and further afield increase pupils' understanding of how different localities affect types of work. Teachers build on this understanding by involving pupils in research into the local area, areas in different parts of Britain and the wider world. For example, work on Chembakolli makes pupils aware of the difficulties of life in other countries. Pupils use information and communication technology and mathematics satisfactorily to support their work. They use English well to record their findings, but sometimes do not take enough care over writing neatly and clearly. This restricts their achievement. The subject leader ensures there is full coverage of the National Curriculum by checking teachers' planning. Her consistent and carefully monitored assessment systems show how well pupils are doing as they move through the school. These reflect the good rate of improvement since the previous inspection.
67. Pupils' work shows they have interesting and stimulating work in **history**. Their knowledge and understanding of the history of their locality is good. The school enhances this by visits to local places of historical interest and museums. For instance, during the inspection, Year 4 pupils visited the Lowry art gallery and museum. Pupils' understanding of why things change and the impact of the passing of time on people's lives indicate above average standards. They make effective use of books and the Internet for independent research. Together with the good quality curriculum planning and strong leadership, these are improvements since the previous inspection. Year 5 pupils showed much interest in how people lived during the Second World War. They clearly enjoyed the visit from two ladies who were children during the war, and found it hard to comprehend how people managed on their food rations. Pupils write interesting accounts of their work but, sometimes, do not take enough care over writing neatly and clearly. This restricts their achievement. The clear and carefully structured systems that check how well pupils are learning give a clear picture of achievement across the school. This is an

improvement since the previous inspection and reflects the strong leadership. Improvement is good.

## **Religious education**

Provision in religious education is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses:**

- The impact of the curriculum on pupils' knowledge, the views they express and their beliefs are impressive.
- Pupils' achievement exceeds expectations in the subject.
- There are good monitoring systems in place to support teaching and learning.

### **Commentary**

68. The school follows the guidance in the Salford Agreed Syllabus and the guidance from the Local Education Authority. The good curriculum programme helps to ensure that pupils increase their knowledge and understanding well so that pupils have reached standards that are above those expected by the end of Year 6. Pupils' work contains a balanced range of sketches and writing, which makes the subject memorable and interesting. Pupils in Year 6 talk in detail and with a good level of understanding about the major religions they have studied, including Judaism, Hinduism and Christianity. They say that lessons in religious education have taught them a great deal about their own faith and the faith of others.
69. Teaching and learning are good. Pupils are knowledgeable and remember a great deal about what they have been taught. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the subject, recalling their knowledge from past lessons. From work in pupils' books, it is clear that teachers build on previous learning. For example, in Year 6, when pupils study Judaism, Hinduism and Christianity, they make comparisons between the three faiths. They examine how each religion celebrates birth. The Year 3 teacher makes good use of drama when pupils act out the Jewish festival of Sukkot. They role-play how the event came to pass and pretend to prepare the meal to remember it. This practical approach to teaching is a powerful way of helping pupils understand and recall what they are taught. In some classes, pupils of different faiths are encouraged to bring their personal knowledge to the lessons. This helps pupils, not only to learn about religion, but also to learn skills such as empathy and tolerance. Teachers mark pupils' work in a supportive way, so they are quite clear about what they have done well and what they need to do to improve.
70. The subject is led and managed well by an enthusiastic co-ordinator. She has worked hard to improve provision since the previous inspection and has a clear picture of standards across the school. The co-ordinator has attended several courses and has also encouraged others to attend. In this way, teachers' subject knowledge is improving. There are regular assessments made at the end of each topic and the outcomes inform the co-ordinator about the impact teaching is having on pupils' learning. She has observed class teachers and monitors pupils' work to check provision and identify what needs to be done to improve this. She has given teachers good support in assessing pupils and is currently producing a portfolio of work representative of standards expected at different levels

## **CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS**

71. The team was not able to make any overall judgements about teaching or provision in art and design, design and technology, music or physical education, since it was not possible to observe enough lessons. Judgements are based on the small number of lessons and other activities seen, an examination of pupils' work, teachers' planning and discussions with pupils.

72. In **art and design**, pupils have satisfactory opportunities to develop their understanding of a range of skills and techniques. Pupils in Year 1 develop satisfactory drawing and picture composition skills through completing a picture around one that was started for them. The different ways they approached this show that pupils use their imagination well. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development. Year 4 pupils have looked at the ideas behind Australian aboriginal art and have constructed pictures of a journey in this style. There are good community links. Pupils in Year 4 were invited to paint the walls of a nearby subway to enhance the quality of the environment. Assessment is now satisfactory.
73. In **design and technology**, the well-planned curriculum helps to ensure that pupils design, make and evaluate a sound range of made products. Design and technology work across the school shows clear progression in skills and understanding, and in use of materials. For example, Year 1 pupils make salads, and write about how they did this and what they thought of them. Year 4 pupils demonstrate a good understanding of 'fitness for purpose' as they look at photographs of different chairs that they found on the Internet, then make, finish and evaluate their own. In Year 6, pupils have carefully followed a design brief when making slippers. They took measurements and made patterns when doing so, thus gaining a good understanding of the process. This shows at least satisfactory improvement since the last inspection, when planning and assessment were weak.
74. In **music**, the team was able to see only two lessons in music and to hear singing in assemblies.
75. Documentation indicates that the development of pupils' musical skills is good. There are good opportunities for all pupils to take part in concerts and productions, and to play musical instruments. Since the last inspection, there have been clear improvements in pupils' singing skills, to the procedures for and use of assessment, and to the range and quality of resources. The school has maintained its contact with the Hallé Orchestra since the previous inspection, and this helps to ensure that all pupils have opportunities to listen to good quality music. It makes effective use of music workshops to improve pupils' ability to compose and perform music. Work in the lessons seen shows that pupils achieve above average standards by Year 4 in their composing and performing skills. There are good quality instruments, western and non-western, that make a positive contribution to pupils' interests, achievements and cultural awareness. However, the cluttered music room does not give pupils an area in which to work reflectively. The new subject leader is providing strong leadership in ensuring all teachers attend courses to increase their confidence and expertise. Improvement since the previous inspection is good.
76. In **physical education**, it was only possible to see one dance lesson during the course of the inspection. This means it is not possible to make a secure judgement about the quality of teaching and learning.
77. In the lesson observed, the quality of teaching and learning was good. This enabled pupils to achieve well in developing their skills in responding to music and creating sequences of movement. Pupils also achieve well in a wide range of sporting activities and receive coaching from football teams, such as Salford and Manchester United youth coaches. They have support from the local Sixth Form College for athletics and games. This, in part, compensates for the lack of enough grassed areas for these elements of physical education. Pupils achieve well in swimming and have good opportunities to take part in adventurous outdoor activities. Enhancement to the physical education curriculum is good and makes a positive contribution to pupils' interest and achievements. The good leadership of the subject ensures that there is effective assessment of progress and achievement. Improvement since the previous inspection is good.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP**

78. **Personal, social and health education** was sampled by talking with pupils and staff. Pupils enjoy lessons and benefit well from them. They take full advantage of games and activities teachers provide, and learn to work alongside classmates with whom they might not otherwise engage. They enjoy talking in pairs and discussing a range of issues. The subject makes a positive contribution to pupils' understanding of citizenship as they find out how society works and are encouraged to recycle materials they use in school. They discuss current affairs, such as the death of Ronald Regan and the riots that sometimes occur following important international football matches. The School Council for pupils in Years 3 to 6 contributes well to pupils' understanding of citizenship by providing a good forum for them to discuss relevant issues and take a real part in decision-making. Pupils also have good opportunities to discuss issues that matter to them, such as dealing with conflicts that arise at home and in school. They find out about simple legal matters, about puberty, and about substance abuse. Lessons in other subjects make a positive contribution to pupils' personal and social understanding. For example, Year 4 pupils thoughtfully discussed the implications of the apartheid system in South Africa during reading sessions. Pupils learn about keeping healthy in science and physical education lessons, and the lunchtime 'Fitbods' clubs encourage pupils to take enjoyable exercise. The school is well supported by the Local Education Authority in its work on drugs education. Each year, the 'Life Education Caravan' comes to the school and pupils benefit greatly from the visit, learning how to keep safe and well in a range of situations.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	2
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>3</b>
Pupils' achievement	3
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	5
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	2

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