

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ST MARGARET'S C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL**

LEA area: Rochdale

Unique reference number: 105815

Headteacher: Mrs J Mellor

Lead inspector: Mrs Marina Gough

Dates of inspection: 7th – 10th June 2004

Inspection number: 257783

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:	194
School address:	Heys Lane Heywood Lancashire
Postcode:	OL10 3RD
Telephone number:	01706 369639
Fax number:	01706 620192
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Dennis Chesworth
Date of previous inspection:	April 1998

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

The school is situated in Heywood, and most pupils come from the local area. There are currently 194 pupils on roll. Almost all pupils are of white ethnicity, and the school has no pupils for whom English is an additional language. Thirty four pupils are on the school's special educational needs register, including two pupils who have statements of special educational needs. This represents 17 per cent of the pupil population and is about average. Levels of pupil mobility are average, with 14 pupils joining school other than at the usual point of entry and 14 pupils leaving school other than at the usual point of transfer. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals has risen sharply since the last inspection from 21 per cent to 36 per cent. The school is involved in the Healthy Schools Initiative, and has recently achieved the Gold Sporting Schools Active Mark. The attainment of pupils on entry to the school is below the expected level.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
22361	Mrs M Gough	Lead inspector	Foundation Stage, science, music.
13746	Mr D Russell	Lay inspector	
23977	Mrs A Smith	Team inspector	Mathematics, art and design, design and technology, geography, history.
29688	Mr M Brammer	Team inspector	English, information and communication technology, physical education, personal, social and health education and citizenship, special educational needs.

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **satisfactory** school that is starting to move forward in some key aspects of its work. Standards by the time pupils leave school at the age of 11 are below national expectations in English and science, and in line with national expectations in mathematics. Pupils achieve satisfactorily. Teaching is satisfactory overall, and has some good features. The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory overall. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- Standards in the core subjects are starting to rise after a period of decline.
- The teaching seen during the inspection was mostly good.
- The headteacher provides good pastoral leadership but she is not sufficiently rigorous in monitoring and accurately evaluating the school's work.
- The curriculum for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 pupils is unsatisfactory because it lacks balance, and not enough time is given to some subjects.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to school, and behaviour in class is good.
- In most subjects, not enough use is made of the assessment data that is gathered to highlight strengths and weaknesses, or to inform planning.
- This is a caring school that provides very good levels of support and guidance for the pupils.
- Links with parents and other schools are good, and links with the community are very good.
- This is an inclusive school where all pupils are valued, and their achievements celebrated.

Since the last inspection, the overall improvement has been satisfactory. Although standards temporarily dipped in Key Stage 2 in English and science, mainly because of lack of continuity in teaching in these areas, they are starting to rise again. Teaching has improved well, and the school has worked hard to bring about improvements in the pupils' behaviour. The school has recently installed a computer suite which is already impacting well on standards in this area. Most issues from the last report have been addressed, but there is still more work to be done in terms of using assessment information to raise standards further. The newly formed senior management team is bringing about swift improvement across many aspects of the school's work, but the impact in some areas is not yet fully evident.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 compared with:	All schools			Similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	C	D	E	E
Mathematics	B	D	C	C
Science	D	E	E	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.*

Pupils' achievement is **satisfactory** throughout the school. Speaking skills are poor throughout the school, and hamper pupils' learning in other subjects.

On the basis of the 2003 end of Key Stage 2 national test results, pupils' attainment in English and science is well below the national average and their attainment in mathematics is in line with the national average. Based on their prior attainment, the pupils' performance is well below average in English and science and average in mathematics. Standards have been inconsistent in recent

years, but the 2003 test results show that standards are lower in English and science than they were at the time of the last inspection. The inspection findings paint a more positive picture and indicate that standards are in line with national expectations in mathematics and below national expectations in English and science. The recent improvement in standards is due to better teaching, and in the case of science, a more comprehensive whole-school curriculum.

On the basis of the 2003 end of Key Stage 1 test results, the pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is well below the national average, and well below average in comparison with similar schools. The 2003 teacher assessments for science show that pupils' attainment is well below the national average. As in Key Stage 2, the inspection findings paint a more positive picture, reflecting the impact of recent initiatives in the school, and show that standards in mathematics are at the nationally expected level, and that standards in English and science are below national expectations, but starting to improve.

In information and communication technology, standards are below national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, and in music, physical education and geography, standards are in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. The pupils' achievement is satisfactory.

The children's attainment when they join the school in the reception class is below the expected level. Many children have poor spoken language skills, and some have limited social skills. By the time they transfer to Year 1, the children's attainment is well below the expected level in communication, language and literacy, below the expected level in mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development, and at the expected level in physical development and personal, social and emotional development. Taken overall, the children's achievement is satisfactory.

The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good** overall. Their behaviour is satisfactory, and often good in class, where it is well managed. Pupils of all ages have positive attitudes to learning and to school. Attendance is satisfactory.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The school provides a **satisfactory** quality of education for all pupils. Teaching is **satisfactory** overall, and much of the teaching seen during the inspection was good. Assessment is satisfactory in the Foundation Stage, and unsatisfactory in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage children is satisfactory, but the curriculum for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 pupils lacks balance and is unsatisfactory. The school provides a satisfactory range of enrichment activities. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory overall. This is a very caring school that provides very good levels of support and guidance. Good systems are in place to ensure the safety and well-being of all pupils. The school is effective in the way in which it seeks the views of the pupils. The school has good links with parents and with other schools. Links with the community are very good.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership and management of the school are **satisfactory** overall. The headteacher's management of the school is satisfactory, but her leadership is unsatisfactory. A preoccupation with staffing issues in the last few years has meant that the headteacher has not been able to develop a number of important systems that would have led to earlier improvements. The leadership and management of key staff and the governing body are satisfactory, but there is not enough rigour to some of the monitoring procedures.

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

Parents are pleased with the school and with the standard of education their children receive. Pupils of all ages enjoy coming to school.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- improve standards in speaking;
- ensure that enough time is given to all subjects to enable full in-depth coverage of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study;
- make more use of the assessment information that is gathered to highlight whole-school strengths and weaknesses;
- put rigorous systems in place to enable accurate self-evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses;
- develop the monitoring role of the governing body, and make the existing monitoring procedures more rigorous.

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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

Pupils' achievement is **satisfactory** throughout the school. Standards are at the **expected level** in mathematics by the time pupils leave school at the age of eleven, and in science and English standards are **below** national expectations.

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

- Standards in English, mathematics and science are now starting to improve in both key stages.
- Standards of speaking are poor throughout the school and hamper the pupils' learning across the curriculum.

#### **Commentary**

1. The picture of improvement in standards since the last inspection is very mixed. In English and science, standards are lower than they were, but in mathematics in Key Stage 2, standards have improved. Since the last inspection, there has been a significant change in the nature of the pupil population, which is seen most clearly in Key Stage 1. The attainment of children when they join the reception class is lower than it was, especially in terms of spoken language skills, which are often poor. These weaknesses in speaking adversely affect the pupils' learning across the curriculum, and many pupils have great difficulty in explaining their ideas clearly, giving their opinions, and expressing their feelings.
2. In addition to the changes in the natural ability of pupils joining the school, there has been a lack of continuity and disruption in the pupils' learning over recent years because of a very high level of maternity leaves, resulting in a succession of supply teachers for some classes. The school has not been sufficiently effective in monitoring the impact of these staff changes through the careful tracking and ongoing analysis of pupils' progress and attainment.
3. Since the recent appointment of several new key members of staff, standards are showing definite signs of improvement. The school now has a clear agenda for development across the school, and the current teaching staff have the capacity and experience to continue with the rapid pace of improvement that has already begun. The pupils' achievement is now satisfactory.

#### **Foundation Stage**

4. The children's attainment when they join the school in the reception class is below the expected level. Many children have poor spoken language skills, and some have limited social skills. By the time they transfer to Year 1, the children's attainment is well below the expected level in communication, language and literacy, below the expected level in mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development, and at the expected level in physical development and personal, social and emotional development. Taken overall, the children's achievement is satisfactory. However, even more needs to be done to improve the children's speaking skills in the reception year.

## Key Stage 1

### Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average points score in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	13.8 (16.0)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	11.5 (14.1)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	13.8 (15.1)	16.3 (16.5)

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

- On the basis of the 2003 end of Key Stage 1 test results, the pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is well below the national average, and well below average in comparison with similar schools. The 2003 teacher assessments for science show that pupils' attainment is well below the national average.
- The inspection findings paint a more positive picture, reflecting the impact of recent initiatives in the school, and show that standards in mathematics are at the nationally expected level, and that standards in English and science are below national expectations, but starting to improve.
- In information and communication technology, standards are below national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1, but are starting to improve quite rapidly because of the good opportunities that are provided for pupils to work in the newly-installed computer suite. In music, geography and physical education, standards are in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1. Key Stage 1 pupils of all abilities achieve satisfactorily in all subjects.

## Key Stage 2

### Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average points score in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	24.6 (25.8)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	27.2 (26.2)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	27.0 (26.8)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 32 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

- On the basis of the 2003 end of Key Stage 2 national test results, pupils' attainment in mathematics is in line with the national average, and their attainment in English and science is well below the national average. Based on their prior attainment, the pupils' performance is well below average in English and science and average in mathematics. This indicates that although the pupils have made satisfactory progress between the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 in mathematics, they have not made enough progress in the same period in English and science.
- The inspection findings indicate that standards in mathematics are in line with national expectations, and that standards in English and science are below national expectations. Pupils are now benefiting from frequently good teaching in the core subjects, and gaps in their learning are being successfully addressed. As a result, pupils are achieving satisfactorily overall, and standards are starting to rise.
- In information and communication technology, pupils' attainment is below the nationally expected level at the end of Key Stage 2, although their achievement is satisfactory. In music, physical education and geography, pupils are attaining standards that are in line with national expectations, and are achieving satisfactorily.

## Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **satisfactory** overall. Their spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory, their social and moral development is good. Pupils have **good** attitudes to school, and their behaviour is **satisfactory**. Attendance is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have good attitudes to school and to learning. They are keen and enthusiastic.
- Behaviour in lessons is good.
- The work of the mentor has a very good impact on the pupils' behaviour and on their personal and social development.
- The pupils' social and moral development is good.

### Commentary

11. Pupils throughout the school have good attitudes to learning. The vast majority of pupils concentrate well in lessons, and enjoy taking part in discussions. They are often very enthusiastic when taking part in practical activities such as physical education and science, although some pupils lack self-discipline and become overexcited. Pupils generally work well with one another on shared tasks, and show good levels of co-operation.
12. The pupils' behaviour is satisfactory overall. Behaviour is good in lessons, and is well managed by most staff. During the inspection, some very good behaviour was seen in those lessons where pupils were highly challenged and motivated in the activities they had been given. At playtimes, behaviour is satisfactory, but it is sometimes boisterous. Most pupils respond well to the school's expectations for good behaviour, and conform readily to the school's code of conduct. The school has a good range of rewards to promote good behaviour, and the work of the mentor has a very positive impact on those pupils who have difficulty in managing their own behaviour. Occasional incidents of bullying are dealt with promptly. There is no problem with racial harassment of pupils. There have been no exclusions in the last year.
13. Overall, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The pupils' personal development is good, and during their time in school they make good progress in terms of their moral and social development. Pupils of all abilities become increasingly mature, and willingly take responsibility for jobs around the school. They show good levels of co-operation and have a good understanding of the importance of team work. Pupils have a clear understanding of the difference between right and wrong, and older pupils understand how their actions can impact upon the well-being and happiness of others. Pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory, and they have opportunities to reflect on their own lives and those of others. The 'special boxes' in classrooms, where teachers and pupils put objects that have special meaning for them, provide a good prompt for pupils to discuss feelings of joy and sadness. Pupils' cultural awareness is satisfactory, but is constrained by the narrowness of the statutory curriculum, with the result that there are only limited opportunities for them to look at the culture of others through the study of art and music, for example.

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

Authorised absence	
School data:	4.7
National data:	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data :	1.5
National data:	0.5

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

14. Attendance is satisfactory, and the figures for the current year indicate that the level of attendance is continuing to rise. This is largely because of improved procedures to monitor

and promote attendance, and the good work of the mentor in this aspect of the school's work. The school is working hard to reduce the level of unauthorised absence.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a **satisfactory** quality of education for all pupils. Teaching is **satisfactory** and has some good features. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage children is **satisfactory**, but the curriculum for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 pupils lacks balance and is **unsatisfactory**. The school provides **good** levels of support and guidance for pupils, and overall has **good** links with parents, the community and other schools.

### Teaching and learning

Teaching is **satisfactory** overall throughout the school, and has some good features. Assessment is **satisfactory** in the Foundation Stage, but **unsatisfactory** in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Much of the teaching seen during the inspection was good.
- Although satisfactory, the teaching of speaking skills throughout the school is not good enough to raise standards in this area.
- The school's systems for monitoring teaching and learning are insufficiently rigorous to bring about further improvement.
- Not enough use is made of the assessment information that is collected to highlight strengths and weaknesses across the school.
- Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well and have a consistent and effective approach.
- Lessons are often well paced and resources are used well to enliven pupils' learning.
- Relationships between pupils and adults are good, and as a result there is a positive learning environment.
- Support staff are used well.
- There have been weaknesses in the continuity of pupils' learning in the past as the result of exceptionally high levels of staff absence, mainly through maternity leave.

### Commentary

#### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 35 lessons*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	0	23 (66%)	12 (33%)	0	0	0

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

15. Much of the teaching seen during the inspection was good, and there has been good improvement overall since the time of the last inspection in terms of the overall quality of teaching and learning. However, there have been many staff changes in recent years, and this has led to some inconsistency in the pupils' learning. The impact of this lack of continuity in the pupils' learning and the effect of different teaching styles have not been sufficiently well monitored, and as a result, standards in some areas have declined. Although the new senior management team has started to systematically monitor teaching and learning, the procedures are still not rigorous enough to bring about further improvement, and there are not enough systems to enable good teaching practice to be shared.
16. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall, and much of the teaching seen during the inspection was of good quality. During the period of the inspection, the reception class was taught by a newly qualified teacher who was employed on a supply basis to cover for a maternity leave. The reception teacher is very well supported by experienced and skilful

support staff who work closely with groups of children, responding well to their individual needs. The organisation of the classroom is satisfactory, but not enough room has been given for creative activities, and the children do not have access to a sufficiently wide range of resources in this area of learning. Adults work well with the children in small groups, helping them with their work, and extending their learning through the use of purposeful and open-ended questions, but do not pay enough attention to continually promoting spoken language whilst the children are engaged in 'free-choice' activities. Satisfactory use is made of assessment information to track the children's attainment and achievement and when planning the next stage of their learning.

17. Throughout the school, teachers use resources well to highlight key teaching points and to enhance and enliven the pupils' learning. Pupils often respond very well to resources such as videos, or the puppets used in a personal, social and health education session observed during the inspection. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well, enabling lessons to proceed without interruption, and deal firmly, but sensitively, with the small minority of pupils who have difficulty in managing their own behaviour. Lessons are often well paced, so that the pupils' attention is held and maintained. Where teaching is at its best, teachers share learning objectives with the pupils so that they know what is expected of them. Some teachers use end of session discussions particularly effectively to ask pupils to evaluate what they have learned. This practice is very effective in helping pupils to see the next steps in their learning.
18. Although the teaching of speaking skills is at least satisfactory, and good opportunities are provided for whole-class discussions, not enough specific attention is given to the systematic development of speaking, and standards are too low in this aspect of pupils' learning. Basic skills of reading and numeracy are well taught, and there are some good opportunities for pupils to extend their research and writing skills in other areas of the curriculum. However, although individual teachers provide opportunities for pupils to use and practise skills of numeracy and information and communication technology in their work in other areas, these opportunities tend to arise incidentally and are not consistently planned for.
19. Relationships between teachers and pupils are good, and as a result, pupils are confident about giving answers to questions, or giving their opinions. Pupils are given good additional support in class by classroom assistants who work with individual pupils or groups of pupils. Where support staff work with pupils with special educational needs, this enables them to take a full and active part in all lessons.
20. Assessment is unsatisfactory overall. Although teachers know their pupils well and make satisfactory ongoing assessments of their progress within individual lessons, there is a lack of a robust whole-school system to ensure the accurate tracking of pupils' progress as they move through the school. A great deal of assessment information is gathered, and test results are recorded, but not enough use is made of the information to highlight strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning. In the past, the unsatisfactory use of assessment information has led to dips in progress not being identified and addressed. The newly appointed co-ordinators in English, mathematics and science have made a good start in establishing manageable assessment systems in their areas, and in English, the practice of assessing pupils' written work on a half-termly basis is working well and is having a positive impact on the pupils' learning.

## The curriculum

The curriculum for the Foundation Stage children is **satisfactory**, but the curriculum for Key Stage 1 Key Stage 2 pupils is **unsatisfactory**. The school provides a **satisfactory** range of additional activities that enrich and enhance the statutory curriculum. Accommodation and resources are **satisfactory**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 pupils is unbalanced and not enough time is given to some subjects.
- The organisation of the curriculum is unimaginative, and the available teaching time is not used to maximum effect.
- The provision for personal, social and health education and citizenship is good.
- Pupils have full and equal access to the curriculum.

## Commentary

21. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory, and has been developed well since the last inspection. The curriculum for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 pupils is unsatisfactory overall. In order to try to raise standards, the school has devoted a significant proportion of the available time to the teaching of English. Although in part successful, this strategy has reduced the amount of time allocated to other subjects and as a result subjects such as science, art and design, design and technology, geography, history and music do not receive enough time to enable the National Curriculum Programmes of Study to be covered in enough depth.
22. Because of significant staff changes, there has not been enough curriculum development since the last inspection, and no member of staff has responsibility for monitoring this aspect of the school's work. The organisation of the curriculum lacks imagination. For example, there are days when Year 6 pupils spend the majority of their time studying literacy and numeracy. In addition there is unnecessary time slippage, for example, the over-running of assemblies, which further reduces the available time.
23. The programme for personal, social and health education and citizenship is good, and the school effectively supports pupils' personal development through its programme for sex education and drugs awareness.
24. The school has a strong policy of inclusion which is well reflected in practice. Pupils have equal access to all aspects of school life, and where pupils are withdrawn from class for additional support with language or mathematics, the withdrawal is carefully monitored so that pupils do not regularly miss the same lesson. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall. Individual education plans are in place for all pupils, but the targets are sometimes not sufficiently specific to the pupils' individual needs.
25. The curriculum is supported by a satisfactory range of extracurricular activities, including netball, choir and art clubs. A small number of visits are used well to further enrich the curriculum, and the residential visit to 'Robinwood' helps to promote good social and team skills for the older pupils.
26. The accommodation and resources for learning are satisfactory, as is the match of teachers and support staff to the curriculum. The new computer suite is a good resource that is having a positive impact on the pupils' learning.

## Care, guidance and support

The steps taken to ensure pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are **good**. The school provides **very good** support, advice and guidance to pupils and monitors their personal development closely. The school involves pupils **well** in its work and development.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- This is a caring school where pupils are very well known to the headteacher and staff.
- There is a very strong policy of inclusion, and individual pupils are given the additional support they need to enable them to take a full role in school life.

- Teachers very effectively monitor the pupils' personal development, and are vigilant in ensuring their happiness and well-being.
- Pupils' views are sought and there are plenty of opportunities for them to become involved with school life.
- The lunchtime supervisors do not always follow the school's behaviour management policy when dealing with minor behavioural problems.

### **Commentary**

27. Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are high priorities for all members of staff and the governing body. The headteacher set a good lead in terms of the pastoral care of pupils, and ensures that staff are fully conversant with the necessary and agreed procedures for ensuring the pupils' health and safety. The school is very effective in the way in which it promotes the value of a healthy lifestyle. The governing body fulfils its statutory duties well, and ensures that risk assessments are properly carried out, and makes regular audits to ensure the safety of the building.
28. Through Excellence in Cities funding, the school employs a full-time mentor who takes a strong lead in ensuring that the behaviour improvement programme is implemented across the school. This is working well in the main, and there has been a reduction in behavioural incidents. However, as yet not enough has been done to ensure that lunchtime supervisors are fully conversant with the routines and agreed procedures, and at times, their management of the older pupils is ineffective.
29. The very effective, although largely informal, monitoring of pupils' personal development enables the school to offer pupils very good guidance and support. The school has access to the services of a trained counsellor, and she is used very well to support individuals who have personal problems. Teachers and support staff know the pupils very well and quickly identify those pupils who have difficulties. The mentor plays a key role in supporting individual pupils, and in enabling them to be fully included in the life and work of the school.
30. The school involves pupils well in its work and development. Pupils are encouraged to set and review personal targets to improve their learning and behaviour. The school council, formed last year, is a useful forum through which pupils can make suggestions for improving the school environment. For example, the pupils were actively involved in designing some of the playground activities. A number of pupils are active within the "buddy system" introduced to assist the younger pupils experiencing difficulties during playtime. The Gardening Club activities encourage pupils to take a pride in the school's grounds. These, and many more initiatives, allow the pupils to play an active role in the life of the school and to develop their understanding of the needs of others.

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

The school has established a **good** partnership with parents and other schools. Links with the community are **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Most parents are very supportive of the school, and a number help out in class and on visits.
- Good communication links enable parents to understand what is happening at the school and how well their children are progressing.
- The school actively seeks the views of parents through regular questionnaires.
- The school uses the community very well to enrich pupils' learning. There are strong links with the church.
- Transfer arrangements for pupils are effective.

### **Commentary**

31. The vast majority of parents view the school in a positive light. They are pleased with their children's progress, and with the level of information provided by the school. Reports on pupils' progress are good, and show parents how well their children are progressing and what they can do to improve. Several parents help at the school and listen to children reading. The school is effective in the way in which it seeks parents' views through questionnaires, and the way in which it feeds back the outcomes to parents. The school has an open-door policy and tries hard to support parents who are experiencing difficulties.
32. The school has very good links with the local community, many of which are fostered through the strong links with the church. Joint ventures help to reinforce the school as a focal point of the community, and enable parents and other community members to mingle. The involvement of the school in community events widens the pupils' experience, and successfully promotes aspects of their personal and social development. Members of the local community are very supportive of the school and its events.
33. The school's links with other schools in the area are good. For example, a 'Pathfinder' project has been organised in conjunction with a Rochdale school with a high level of ethnic minority pupils. This link enriches the pupils' multicultural understanding, and their appreciation of others' beliefs and aspirations. Transition arrangements with the local Community High School are good. Teachers from the high school liaise with Year 6 pupils, and the mentors from both schools work closely together to ensure that the transfer of pupils is as stress free as possible.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are **satisfactory** overall. The headteacher's management of the school is **satisfactory**, but her leadership is **unsatisfactory**. The leadership and management of key staff and the governing body are **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The newly formed senior management team has the capacity, desire and determination to bring about improvement.
- The governing body is very supportive of the school and its work, but its monitoring role is underdeveloped.
- The headteacher provides good pastoral leadership for the school.
- The school has a strong policy of inclusion which is fully reflected in practice.
- The lack of important systems makes it difficult for the school to effectively monitor and critically evaluate its work.
- The monitoring of teaching and learning is firmly established, but the systems are not sufficiently rigorous.
- Although the school has fully addressed most of the issues arising from the last inspection, the many staff changes have hindered further whole-school development.

### Commentary

34. Overall, the school is satisfactorily led and managed. On a day-to-day basis, the headteacher manages the school satisfactorily, although there is some time slippage, for example, when assemblies overrun. The finances are managed satisfactorily, and spending is appropriately linked to targets in the School Development Plan. Staff are effectively deployed, and the appointment of a part-time 'floating' teacher has led to greater consistency in the pupils' learning in the event of staff absence. Induction procedures for the newly qualified teachers are good.
35. There are weaknesses in the headteacher's leadership. In the past few years, she has dealt well with the effects of a significant number of staff absences, mainly due to maternity leave. However, the time taken to manage the disruptions caused by these absences has meant that she has not been able to develop some necessary systems which would have enabled

weaknesses to have been more quickly identified and addressed. As a result, she has not been sufficiently proactive in recent years in leading the school forward in some areas, and weaknesses in assessment, standards and the curriculum have not been tackled with enough rigour to bring about improvement. The headteacher has successfully developed some aspects of the school's work, most notably those relating to the pupils' care and welfare, and as a result, the pupils' behaviour has improved well. She provides a strong lead for staff in ensuring that the school provides a caring and supportive learning environment for all pupils.

36. The headteacher has recently made some very good key appointments, and the new co-ordinators for English, mathematics and science, together with the headteacher, form a strong and single-minded senior management team which is very committed to moving the school forward, and to addressing the current weaknesses in provision. The senior management team has identified most of the issues arising from the current inspection, and is well aware of the need to continue to raise standards. A good start has already been made, and the decline that has been seen in English and science in recent years has been convincingly halted. The leadership and management of the key staff are satisfactory, as although they have made a good start, the impact of their actions and the initiatives that have been introduced, are not yet evident in all aspects of the school's work.
37. The monitoring of the school's work is not sufficiently rigorous in some areas. Although there is a regular programme of monitoring by the headteacher and the senior management team, and the outcomes are shared with staff, some of the observations of classroom practice are too gentle to bring about further improvement. The school does not currently have enough secure systems to ensure that the evaluation of its work is sufficiently accurate and thorough. For example, whole-school assessment procedures are weak, and there has been too little in-depth analysis of the factors that have led to the temporary decline in standards in English and science for the 2003 Year 6 group. As a result, the school's capacity for making an accurate self-evaluation of its strengths and weaknesses is hampered.
38. The leadership and management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has other major responsibilities within the school but supports other teachers by setting aside a regular time for consultation with them. There are good relationships with outside agencies and this helps to promote the pupils' learning. The governor with responsibility for pupils with special educational needs is supportive and works with pupils in school on a regular basis.
39. The governance of the school is satisfactory. Governors are loyal and are very supportive of the headteacher and school. They satisfactorily fulfil their statutory responsibilities and help to shape the school through their involvement in the school development plan. However, although governors make regular visits to the school and have a satisfactory appreciation of the school's life and work, their monitoring role lacks rigour. The governing body has an appropriate range of committees which meet on a regular basis to discuss and formulate school policy, and the involvement of individual governors in setting and monitoring the budget is good.

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	477,734
Total expenditure	465,504
Expenditure per pupil	2,411

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	23,897
Balance carried forward to the next	12,230

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

## AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The overall provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching seen during the inspection was good.
- Speaking skills are poor by the end of the reception year, and they need to be higher. There is not always enough adult intervention when the children are engaged in 'free-choice' activities.
- There is a good balance between activities the children choose themselves and those that are led by an adult.
- The children get a secure and happy start to their education.
- Support staff are experienced and are used very well to support the children's learning.
- There have been good improvements in the Foundation Stage curriculum since the last inspection.
- The accommodation is cramped, and this limits the range of activities that can be provided, especially in creative development.
- Good use is made of the outside play area, although there are not enough wheeled toys.

### Commentary

40. The children's attainment is below the expected level when they start school at the age of four. Their speaking skills are poor, and some children have poorly developed social skills. By the time they transfer to Year 1, the children's attainment is well below the expected level in communication, language and literacy, below the expected level in mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development, and at the expected level in physical development and personal, social and emotional development. Although the children's achievement is satisfactory overall, standards of speaking are poor at the end of the reception year, and more needs to be done to raise them.
41. During the inspection, the reception class was taught by a supply teacher who had been in post for less than one term, covering maternity leave. The teaching seen during the inspection was good. However, the attainment and achievement of the children indicate that teaching is satisfactory overall. The reception class is very well supported by two assistants. They have worked very closely with the temporary teacher, enabling good levels of continuity in the children's learning. There is a good balance of interesting activities, and good emphasis is placed on the children learning through structured play activities. The curriculum has improved well since the last inspection, and is now appropriately linked to the areas of learning for Foundation Stage children instead of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study. The formal recording and use of assessment information are satisfactory, and adults know the children very well on an individual basis.
42. The school has established good links with parents, and they receive good levels of information. Good attention is paid to matters of health and safety. Although the children benefit from access to a secure outside play area, the main classroom is cramped, making it difficult for the teacher to organise the ongoing provision of sand and for her to provide a sufficiently broad range of art and craft activities. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory.
43. In **personal, social and emotional development**, the children achieve well, and most attain the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. The teaching is good overall, although the formal weekly personal, social and health education lesson is a weaker aspect of the provision as it does little to advance the children's learning, and too much time is spent on

recording activities. Mostly, the children are well behaved, although some find it difficult to share resources in a friendly manner. The children respond well to the teacher and to other adults, and are keen to please. Several children are very immature, and are not yet able to distinguish between right and wrong, but most have a good moral awareness. Most children show satisfactory levels of independence, for example when they change for physical education, but a small number are still heavily reliant on adults. The children are happy in school, and respond well to the adults with whom they come into daily contact.

44. In **communication, language and literacy**, the children achieve satisfactorily overall. However, their attainment is well below the expected level when they transfer to Year 1. Although teaching in this area of learning is satisfactory, it is not rigorous enough to raise standards of speaking. Speaking skills are poor for many children and need to be higher. By the end of the reception year, children of all abilities have made a good start in learning how to read. In this aspect of communication, language and literacy, the children achieve well. They receive a lot of support from teachers and other adults in school, and a good number of parents provide additional support at home. Standards in writing are well below the expected level, and few children are fluent 'writers' by the time they leave the reception class. Speaking skills are poor, although listening skills are at the expected level for most children. During the inspection, there were many good opportunities for the children to take part in class discussions. However, there is not enough adult intervention when the children are engaged in 'free-choice' activities, and some important opportunities are missed for developing the children's spoken language and for developing specialist vocabulary.
45. In **mathematical development**, the children achieve satisfactorily, but their overall attainment at the end of the reception year is below the expected level. During the inspection, the teaching was good. Adults make good use of opportunities that arise during the course of the day for reminding pupils about the order and sequence of numbers. Number rhymes and jingles are used well to promote mathematical ideas. The children have good access to a water tray where they explore capacity, but there is not always enough adult intervention to ensure that the children's vocabulary is extended and that concepts are fully understood. Few children count reliably up to and beyond ten, and a significant proportion do not have a secure grasp of the idea of one to one matching. However, most children recognise simple three-dimensional shapes, and higher attainers confidently explain comparisons such as more/less than, and shorter/longer than. Children have good access to a range of jigsaws and matching and sorting activities, but do not have regular access to sand, where they could explore concepts such as heavier/lighter than.
46. In **knowledge and understanding of the world**, the children achieve satisfactorily from a low starting point, but most do not attain the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. Despite the good teaching seen during the inspection, the children have difficulty in retaining information and in applying what they know to new situations. The children observe carefully, and take a good interest in the outside environment and in the way that living things grow and move. The children's appreciation of the difference between the past and the present is often very vague. Whilst some can recount events in their own lives from the past, few can order these events reliably. Most children have a good understanding of the relationships within their own families, and higher attainers explain more complex relationships such as cousins. Few children know their own addresses, or can describe physical features in the area. The children have daily access to the class-based computers, and weekly access to the new computer suite. Their skills are very limited, and no child is able to open and close programs or use the 'print' command. Religious education is taught on a regular basis.
47. The children's attainment in **physical development** is at the expected level, and children of all abilities achieve well. The children benefit from good teaching, and a good combination of 'free-choice' activities, and more formal class activities that focus on the progressive development of skills. The children have good access to a pleasant and secure outside area which has some climbing equipment and room for them to use small balls. However, there are not enough wheeled toys. In the hall, the children show a satisfactory spatial awareness, and

growing control of their bodies as they run, jump and balance. Fine-motor skills, such as cutting, and controlling pencils and brushes, are satisfactory overall, and good for higher-attaining children who show good levels of hand-to-eye co-ordination.

48. In **creative development**, the children's attainment is below the expected level for their age. The children's achievement is satisfactory, but could be better. Although teaching is satisfactory, the cramped conditions reduce the activities that can be provided for the children. Although there is a painting easel which children have access to throughout the day, there are limited opportunities for them to build models or to make collages using a wide variety of different materials. A weekly music session, led by the specialist teacher, provides good opportunity for the children to make music and to learn songs, but during the week, the children do not have access to musical instruments as part of their 'free-choice' activities. The 'Florist's Shop' is a popular area where the children take part in role-play activities. Whilst they thoroughly enjoy their work in this area, and generally work well together, there is not enough adult intervention to extend the children's vocabulary.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

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

- Although standards are below the nationally expected level, they are starting to improve across the school.
- Standards of speaking are well below the expected level throughout the school and this hampers pupils' progress and attainment in other subjects.
- The teaching seen during the inspection was of good quality.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to the subject which have a good impact on their learning.
- Good leadership and management of the subject are helping to bring about good improvements.
- Literacy makes a good contribution to pupils' learning in other subjects.
- The quality of marking is weak.
- The regular assessment of pupils' writing is helping to raise standards.

#### **Commentary**

49. The 2003 end of Key Stage 2 national test results show that pupils' attainment is well below the national average. On the basis of their prior attainment, the pupils' performance is well below average, suggesting that pupils have not made enough progress between the end of Key Stage 1 and the end of Key Stage 2. The school believes that this dip was the result of changes in staffing. The 2003 end of Key Stage 1 test results show that pupils' attainment is well below the national average in reading and writing, and well below average in comparison with similar schools.
50. The inspection findings show evidence of the recent improvements that have taken place, and indicate that pupils' attainment is below national expectations at the end of both key stages. This positive improvement is attributable to the good leadership and management by the newly appointed co-ordinator, and the recent focus on English across the school by all staff. The achievement of pupils of all ages and abilities is satisfactory. Standards have declined since the time of the last inspection, but are starting to rise again. The overall rate of improvement since the last inspection is unsatisfactory, but recent improvements are good.
51. Although standards in listening are at the expected level, standards of speaking are well below the expected level across the school. Pupils of all ages struggle to express their ideas, feelings and opinions, and lack the necessary subject-specific vocabulary to enable them to

explain their thinking clearly. The school has recognised this weakness, and is taking part in a local initiative with other schools which is starting to bring about improvement in this area of learning. Standards in reading are at the expected level across the school, and reflect the good efforts of staff and volunteer helpers, who ensure that pupils have regular reading practice. Pupils of all abilities have good attitudes to reading, and are keen to improve their skills further. Standards in writing are below average in both key stages. For most pupils, spelling is a weakness that is exacerbated by the pupils' sometimes poor speech. Many pupils have difficulty in developing their ideas, and their work lacks imagination. The handwriting of the higher-attaining pupils is good, but lower attainers in both key stages have difficulty in forming letters correctly, and for a few pupils letter reversal is a real problem.

52. Teaching is satisfactory overall. However, during the inspection, the teaching seen was often good. Teachers have good classroom skills, and try to make lessons interesting and enjoyable for the pupils. Where the best teaching occurs, teachers share the purpose of the lesson with pupils, and activities are varied and well matched to the pupil's level of ability. In most classes, teachers manage the pupils well, enabling lessons to run smoothly. There is a good variety of teaching methods, with pupils working individually, in groups, as a whole class and in pairs. Paired work is effective in helping the pupils to develop their speaking skills, as well as their social skills. Teaching assistants are used well to support different groups of pupils, and they are particularly effective when they work alongside pupils with special educational needs, enabling them to take a full part in lessons. A weakness in teaching is the quality of marking. In most cases, teachers' comments do little to advance the pupils' learning or to make them aware of how they can improve their work further. Pupils throughout the school have positive attitudes to the subject and take a keen and active part in lessons. Where teaching is especially challenging, pupils respond very well, and are keen to do their best.
53. The subject has been a focus for whole-school development during the past year, and is well led and managed by the newly appointed co-ordinator. Teaching and planning are monitored regularly to raise standards, although some of the observations of lessons lack sufficient rigour. Assessment is good, and a particular strength is the regular assessment of the pupils' written work by teachers working in pairs. This enables the pupils' progress to be carefully tracked and is leading to higher standards. The statutory curriculum is satisfactorily enriched by theatre visits and book fairs, and by a drama link with a local high school.

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

54. There are many good opportunities for pupils to use language and literacy in their work in other subjects, although some of the opportunities for extended writing practice are not formally identified in teachers' planning. Overall, the use made of language and literacy across the curriculum is satisfactory.

### **Mathematics**

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Number is taught well throughout the school.
- The achievement of lower-attaining pupils is good, but higher-attaining pupils are not always sufficiently challenged.
- A satisfactory range of assessment information is gathered, but not enough use is made of this information to highlight strengths and weaknesses in pupils' learning.
- There are not enough planned opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical skills in other subjects.
- Pupils' learning is hampered by weak speaking skills.
- The new subject leader is providing a good and clear steer to the school's work, and standards are starting to rise.

## Commentary

55. The 2003 end of Key Stage 2 national test results show that pupils' attainment is in line with the national average. Based on their prior attainment, the pupils' performance is average, indicating that they made satisfactory progress between the end of Key Stage 1 and the end of Key Stage 2. The end of Key Stage 1 test results show that pupils' attainment is well below the national average, and well below average in comparison with similar schools. The inspection findings show that pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages, and that pupils of all ages and abilities achieve satisfactorily overall. The improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory overall, but pupils' progress has not been consistent. Standards in Key Stage 2 have improved well, but although there has been good improvement in the standards at the end of Key Stage 1 in the past year, standards dipped significantly after the last inspection and have only just started to rise again.
56. In both key stages, pupils gain a secure grasp of number, although the mental recall of lower-attaining pupils is slow. Standards in space, shape and measure are at the expected level overall, and Key Stage 2 pupils have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of data handling. The pupils' ability to solve open-ended problems is a weaker area of their learning, and in this aspect of learning, pupils are sometimes hampered by their poor speaking skills which make it difficult for them to explain their ideas.
57. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Teachers concentrate well on teaching basic skills and pupils are given many opportunities to develop their understanding of number. Pupils show good levels of interest as they search for patterns. Effective support is provided for lower-attaining pupils who sometimes struggle with basic mathematical operations, and this support enables these pupils to achieve well in relation to their abilities. However, in some lessons, there is not enough challenge for the highest attaining pupils. The practice of sharing learning objectives with pupils is very helpful in setting out the expectations of the lesson and provides an effective focus for evaluation in plenary sessions. Shape and space and data handling are taught effectively. Teachers have started to encourage pupils to make effective use of information and communication technology to support their learning, but even more could be done to develop information and communication technology skills through mathematics. Teachers mark pupils' work conscientiously, but this marking does not always show pupils how they could improve their work further. Pupils generally have positive attitudes to learning and are confident about giving answers to questions.
58. The leadership and management are satisfactory overall, but although the new subject leader is providing a good and firm steer to the school's work, there has been insufficient development in the past few years. The current co-ordinator is aware of the strengths and weaknesses within the subject and has a good knowledge of the issues that need to be addressed in order to secure further improvement. Teachers' assessments of pupils' progress are generally accurate and are satisfactory overall. However, not enough use is made of the information that is gathered to highlight whole-school areas for development, or to share good practice. Improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory.

## Mathematics across the curriculum

59. The use of mathematics across the curriculum is unsatisfactory. Incidental opportunities are picked up well in subjects such as science, but there is no planned provision for systematically extending pupils' mathematics skills across the curriculum.

## SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Although standards are below national expectations at the end of both key stages, they are starting to rise.
- Teaching is good throughout the school, but there are gaps in pupils' learning arising from past weaknesses in the curriculum.
- Not enough time is given to the subject to enable the in-depth study of topics.
- The new co-ordinator provides enthusiastic leadership for the subject, and has a clear idea for its future development.
- Assessment is unsatisfactory.
- Poor spoken language skills make it difficult for the pupils to express their ideas clearly.

## Commentary

60. The 2003 end of Key Stage 2 test results indicate that standards in science are well below the national average, as they have been for several years. Based on their prior attainment, the pupils' performance is well below average. This indicates that pupils have not made enough progress between the end of Key Stage 1 and the end of Key Stage 2. The 2003 teacher assessments for Key Stage 1 show that standards are well below the national average.
61. The inspection findings paint a more positive picture than the 2003 teacher assessments and test results, and indicate that standards in science are below national expectations at the end of both key stages. Because of improvements to the curriculum and better teaching, standards are starting to rise at the end of both key stages, and pupils' achievement is currently satisfactory. However, standards are lower than they were at the time of the last inspection.
62. In both key stages, pupils' skills of investigating and experimenting are relative weaknesses. The school has made a good start in improving pupils' investigative skills, and more emphasis is now placed on this element of the science curriculum, but some lessons are too short to enable pupils to pursue their ideas in any real depth. Although Key Stage 1 pupils are now getting a firm grounding in areas such as fair testing, there are gaps in the learning of older Key Stage 2 pupils, and few Year 6 pupils can independently set up a fair test. Throughout the school, pupils are hampered by their poor spoken language skills, although in all classes teachers place good emphasis on the development of scientific vocabulary. Pupils' scientific knowledge is patchy, partly because of past weaknesses in the curriculum, and partly because many pupils have difficulty in retaining their learning for any length of time.
63. Teaching is now good, and has some very good features. As a result, standards are starting to rise. Teachers make good use of a commercial scheme of work which provides a secure basis for their planning, and ensures that there are good levels of progression in pupils' learning as they move through the school. Lessons move at a good pace, and successfully capture and maintain the pupils' interest. Teachers make very good use of discussion sessions to impart new knowledge, and to assess the pupils' learning. Questions are varied to meet the needs of individual pupils and to ensure that higher attainers are stretched in their thinking. Good use is made of classroom assistants, but in some lessons teachers do not have additional support, and this makes the organisation of practical activities difficult, especially when the classes are large. Pupils enjoy their learning, and take an enthusiastic part in practical activities and discussions. However, older Key Stage 2 pupils lack method in their working when they are carrying out investigations.
64. The newly appointed co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership and management for the subject. She has made a good analysis of what the school needs to do next to improve standards further, and has started to monitor lessons and pupils' work to get an overview of standards throughout the school. In the past, little has been done in the way of analysing end of key stage test results in order to highlight whole-school strengths and weaknesses, but this is an area the co-ordinator has already started to address. Although teachers make their own ongoing assessments of the pupils' attainment, there is no robust whole-school system for

assessment that would enable the school to track and monitor the achievement and attainment of individual pupils.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There are gaps in pupils' learning arising from past weaknesses in the curriculum.
- Pupils have good attitudes to the subject.
- The newly-opened computer suite is a very good resource that is well used by all classes.
- Support staff are used well to help individual pupils with their work.
- The use of information and communication technology to support learning in other subjects is underdeveloped.
- Assessment systems are in the early stage of development and are currently unsatisfactory.
- The new co-ordinator has a clear idea of what needs to be done to improve standards further.

### **Commentary**

65. Standards are below national expectations at the end of both key stages, and pupils throughout the school are achieving satisfactorily. Standards are lower than they were at the time of the last inspection. This is partly because until very recently the school did not have sufficient resources to meet the demands of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study, and partly because standards nationally are now much higher than they were.
66. Because of past weaknesses in the curriculum, there are some gaps in pupils' learning which teachers are now systematically and successfully addressing. Pupils of all ages and abilities have regular access to computers for word-processing, but in both key stages have difficulty in finding the keys they need. There are not yet enough opportunities for pupils to use word-processing skills for drafting and editing, and pupils do not readily see computers as tools for learning. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the Internet as a vast source of information, and most know how to use the Internet for research. Pupils currently make little use of the computers for sending email, and few pupils are confident about how to do this. Older pupils have limited experience of using spreadsheets, and of making multimedia presentations, and know how to combine text and graphics. At the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils' knowledge of control technology is weak, and although they have used sensors in their work in science, most have little recall of this learning.
67. Teaching is satisfactory overall, and during the inspection, some good examples of teaching were seen. Teachers' subject knowledge is variable, with some teachers having a good command of the subject, and others who are still on a sharp learning curve. Pupils are well supported by classroom assistants, and this enables pupils of all abilities to make at least satisfactory progress within individual lessons. Skills are well taught, and pupils are given clear explanations to enable them to get on independently with their work. Pupils have good attitudes to the subject and are keen to work in the computer suite. They concentrate well and co-operate willingly with their partner.
68. The leadership and management for the subject are satisfactory overall. The new co-ordinator has a satisfactory overview of the curriculum, and has organised the use of the computer suite well so that pupils have regular and frequent access. The co-ordinator is aware of the next steps to be taken to ensure that standards continue to improve, and is aware of the need for more training for some staff. Assessment systems are in the early stages of development and are currently unsatisfactory as they do not provide a clear enough picture of pupils' attainment and progress as they move through the school.

## Information and communication technology across the curriculum

69. Teachers are beginning to encourage pupils to use information and communication technology to support their learning across the curriculum, but its use is currently too spasmodic, and not sufficiently well planned to ensure that pupils' skills are systematically developed.

## HUMANITIES

**Religious education** was inspected by an independent inspector appointed by the Diocese. The inspection focused on the inspection of **geography**. Little work was seen in **history**, and it is therefore not possible to make a judgement about the overall provision. However, too little time is allocated to the subject in most classes, and this reduces the opportunities for pupils to study topics in depth.

### Geography

Provision in geography is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Although teaching is good, pupils' achievement is only satisfactory because there are gaps in their learning.
- Insufficient time is given to the subject.
- Assessment is unsatisfactory.

### Commentary

70. Pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Pupils achieve satisfactorily, but given the good teaching they receive, could do better if more time was allocated to the subject. Standards are broadly the same as they were at the time of the last inspection, and overall improvement since that time is satisfactory.
71. Pupils make satisfactory gains in terms of the knowledge they acquire, but there are sometimes lengthy gaps in between topics, and pupils forget some of their learning. Although curriculum planning has improved since the last inspection, the long term planning does not give enough guidance for teachers about the skills that should be taught.
72. Teaching is good overall. Teachers use effective strategies to capture pupils' interest, such as quizzes which test the pupils' knowledge in an exciting and challenging way. Good use is made of resources to enliven teaching and to enhance learning, and pupils respond well to video material which brings their learning to life. There is a developing use of information and communication technology to support learning, and pupils have a satisfactory appreciation of how computers can be used to research geographical information. Pupils mostly have positive attitudes to the subject, although in the upper part of Key Stage 2, some pupils have a low level of concentration.
73. The leadership and management of geography are satisfactory overall. The co-ordinator provides support for her colleagues, but her monitoring role is currently limited. Assessment is unsatisfactory overall. Although teachers know the pupils well, and keep their own records of pupils' attainment, there is no whole-school mechanism for tracking the progress and attainment of individual pupils as they move through the school, and not enough use is made of the available assessment information to highlight strengths and weaknesses in the provision.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

The inspection focused on **music** and **physical education**. Not enough evidence was collected to make secure judgements about the provision, standards or the quality of education in **art and design** and **design and technology**. Art and design, and design and technology, are taught on a regular basis in all classes, but not enough time is allocated to these subjects, and as a result, topics are not explored in enough depth. There are sometimes long gaps between topics, and this is not conducive to the pupils' learning, as many have difficulty in retaining and recalling their past learning. The leadership and management of the subjects are satisfactory but there have been problems in continuity in the past arising from an exceptionally high level of maternity leave over recent years.

### Music

The provision for music is **satisfactory**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching is good, and most is carried out by a part-time specialist teacher.
- Although pupils take part in a broad range of musical activities, not enough time is given to the subject.
- Pupils' listening and appraising skills are well developed.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to music and are confident and enthusiastic performers.
- Assessment is unsatisfactory.

#### Commentary

74. Pupils' attainment is at the expected level in music at the end of both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Pupils of all ages and abilities achieve satisfactorily, and given the good teaching they receive, could do even better if more time was given to the subject. Standards are broadly the same as they were at the time of the last inspection.
75. Singing is good throughout the school. The weekly Key Stage 1 group singing session is well taught, enabling pupils to gain a great deal of pleasure from the singing activities and to advance their skills. Key Stage 2 pupils are confident singers who quickly pick up new songs, and sing them tunefully and with a good sense of rhythm. Pupils of all ages have many opportunities to listen to and appraise extracts of music, and most pupils do this well. They make good progress in this aspect of their learning, and by the end of Key Stage 2, pick out different instruments, and note changes to the tempo and dynamics of the music. Pupils throughout the school respond well to the different moods of the music they hear, but because of poor speaking skills, often have difficulty in expressing their ideas and feelings. Pupils have only limited opportunities to compose music, but when they do so, they show a satisfactory understanding of the process, and use graphical and pictorial notation to record their ideas. Currently not enough time is given to composition, and as a result, pupils do not achieve as well as they might in this aspect of the music curriculum.
76. Teaching and learning are good throughout the school. The school benefits from the input of a part-time specialist teacher who works with all classes. Lessons move at a good pace, and there is a good mix of activities. Good use is made of a commercial scheme to provide the basis of the teaching programme, and there are good levels of continuity in the pupils' learning as they move through the school. Pupils of all ages and abilities are keen and enthusiastic participants. They are particularly keen to perform, and show good levels of confidence.
77. The co-ordinator has only been in post for two terms. Her leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. She is aware of the need to ensure that more time is given to the subject, and to ensure that class teachers have the necessary expertise to teach their own classes. Although standards have been maintained since the last inspection, there has been

little in the way of curriculum development. The school currently has no robust systems for assessing and tracking pupils' achievement and attainment as they move through the school, although teachers identify individual pupils who are gifted and talented so that their progress can be more closely monitored. The school provides a satisfactory range of additional learning experiences, and pupils who take part in the choir regularly perform to community groups.

## **Physical education**

Provision for physical education is **satisfactory**.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils have good attitudes to the subject.
- The school has recently achieved the Gold Active Sports Mark.
- Assessment is unsatisfactory.

## **Commentary**

78. During the inspection, only games lessons were taking place, and no other aspect of physical education could therefore be observed. In this aspect of the curriculum, standards are at the expected level at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Pupils of all ages and abilities achieve satisfactorily, and in those lessons where teaching is good, pupils make good progress in acquiring new skills. The school provides a broad curriculum during the course of the year, and an appropriate amount of time is given to the subject. The school has worked hard over the past year to raise the profile of the subject, and was recently awarded the national Gold Active Sports Mark. The school's records show that by the time pupils leave school at the age of 11, most can swim the expected distance of 25 metres.
79. As they move through the school, pupils show progressive degrees of skill in the way in which they pass and receive balls. Most Key Stage 1 pupils catch and throw over a reasonable distance, but lower attainers lack accuracy in both throwing and catching even over a short distance. Pupils are beginning to learn the basic principles of attack and defence. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils show satisfactory levels of hand-to-eye co-ordination, and they throw, catch roll and control balls with their foot with reliable accuracy. Pupils throughout the school have a good understanding of the purpose of 'warm-up' and 'cool down' sessions, and know that exercise has a positive impact on their well-being and health.
80. Teaching is satisfactory overall, and has some good features. Relationships are good between teachers and pupils, and as a result, pupils are confident in their learning. Explanations are often good, enabling pupils to know what is expected of them. Lessons are usually well paced, and contain a good variety of activities. Where teaching is good, teachers make good use of pupil demonstrations to highlight important teaching points and to make suggestions for improvement. Where teaching is at its best, pupils themselves are asked to evaluate the work of others, and this opportunity for critical appraisal helps to make them more aware of their own learning. Where teaching is satisfactory, teachers do not provide enough pointers for improvement, and as a result, pupils do not make as much progress within the lesson as they might. Pupils have positive attitudes to the subject, and take a keen and active part in all lessons. They work well together in teams, and have a good understanding of the need to follow agreed rules, and to support other team members.
81. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory overall, and the enthusiastic and hard-working co-ordinator has made a good start in ensuring that the subject has a high priority in the school. There has been a limited amount of monitoring of teaching and learning, but not enough rigorous monitoring has taken place to highlight areas for development across the whole school. Assessment is unsatisfactory. Although teachers know pupils well, and can comment on the progress of individual pupils, there is no whole-school system for tracking pupils' progress and attainment as they move through the school. There has been satisfactory

progress overall in the development of the subject, and standards are broadly the same as they were at the time of the last inspection.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Formal lessons are taught to all classes, and are supplemented by many informal opportunities for pupils to discuss problems and concerns with other adults.
- The mentor and school counsellor have a positive impact on the personal development of pupils who have difficulties with their learning or with forming relationships.
- Good use is made of the expertise of external agencies to support health education.
- The school's strong links with the community help the pupils to gain a good understanding of the notion of citizenship.

### **Commentary**

82. The school has developed a good programme for promoting the pupils' personal, social and health education and citizenship. Circle Time sessions are held in all classes, enabling pupils to talk about issues of general concern. Some sessions are effectively led by the mentor, who has had training in the use of puppets who help the pupils to express their ideas and feelings. At times, recording tasks are mundane and do little to support the pupils' learning, but in the main, lessons are well prepared and led. Good emphasis is placed on the pupils learning how to maintain a healthy lifestyle through subjects such as science, where pupils learn about healthy diet, the importance of exercise, and the dangers of drug misuse.
83. In addition to the formal programme of personal, social and health education, there are many opportunities throughout the day for pupils to approach their teachers, the mentor, or the headteacher. Pupils have strong relationships with staff, and are unafraid of seeking them out if they have a problem, or something they wish to celebrate and share. The headteacher and staff know the pupils very well, and work closely with families who are experiencing difficulties.
84. The school has an appropriate programme for sex education, and is well supported in this aspect of its work by external agencies, such as the school nurse. The counsellor has regular slots with individual pupils who are experiencing significant difficulties, and provides very good support. Pupils' understanding of citizenship is successfully promoted through activities within the local community, and through the school council, which is starting to take responsibility for shaping some aspects of school life.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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