

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ST ADRIAN'S RC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

St Albans

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 117470

Headteacher: Mrs Yvonne Hawkes

Lead inspector: Mr Steve Bywater

Dates of inspection: 27<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup> June 2005

Inspection number: 267718

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: 3 to 11  
Gender of pupils: Mixed  
Number on roll: 235 (222.5 fte)

School address: Watling View  
St Albans  
Hertfordshire  
Postcode: AL1 2PB

Telephone number: 01727 852687  
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Appropriate authority: Governing body  
Name of chair of Mr Richard Belt  
governors:

Date of previous 16<sup>th</sup> November 1998  
inspection:

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This average-sized primary school is situated in a residential area on the edge of St Albans. The school admits children between the ages of three and 11. There are currently 235 full-time equivalent pupils on roll, of whom fewer than 10 per cent are from a range of minority ethnic groups. No pupil of statutory school age is described as being at an early stage of language acquisition although there are some children in the Foundation Stage<sup>1</sup> who have some difficulties with English. The proportion of pupils known to be entitled to free school meals is around 6 per cent, which is below the national average. A small number of Traveller children are on the school's roll but not all were attending at the time of the inspection. Attainment on entry to the school is average, although the full range of attainment is represented. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs is below the national average. Two pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Need. Twenty-five other pupils have various needs which include learning or physical difficulties and social, emotional and behavioural problems. The school has been awarded the School Achievement Award (2002).

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<sup>1</sup> The Foundation Stage begins when children reach the age of three and ends at the end of the reception class. It is a distinct stage in preparing children for later schooling and is based on six areas of learning. These mainly refer to: communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; and personal, social and emotional development, but also include: knowledge and understanding of the world; and physical and creative development.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
18463	Steve Bywater	Lead inspector	Mathematics, information and communication technology, design and technology and music.
09652	Colin Herbert	Lay inspector	
20301	Peter Isherwood	Team inspector	Foundation stage, science, art and design, physical education and special educational needs.
20368	Sue Macintosh	Team inspector	English, French, geography, history, personal, social and health education and citizenship and English as an additional language.

The inspection contractor was:

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

St Adrian's Roman Catholic Primary School is a **very good** school with many strengths. It provides a high quality education for its children and they achieve very well. The overall quality of teaching and learning is very good and the rich and vibrant curriculum provides very good experiences for the children. The very good leadership and management of the school reflect the very strong commitment and expertise of the staff team and an extremely effective governing body. This very caring and inclusive school provides very good value for money.

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

- The headteacher, key staff and governors provide very good leadership.
- Teaching is very good and pupils achieve very well.
- The school's curriculum is very good. The school's provision for children with special educational needs is also very good.
- Children's overall personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.
- Pupils' attitudes, values and behaviour are very good. Relationships are excellent.
- This is a very caring school which provides very good support and guidance for children.
- The school's partnership with parents and the community is excellent.
- The leadership and management of a few subjects are at an early stage of development.

Improvement since the last inspection has been very good. The school has made considerable progress in improving upon the high standards found in the last inspection. For example, the quality of teaching has improved, with higher proportions of good and very good lessons. There have been very good improvements in information and communication technology (ICT) and statutory requirements are fully implemented. Substantial progress has been made in ensuring that investigations in mathematics and experimental and investigative science are fully met. In all subjects there are opportunities for enquiry, investigation and independent study to enable all pupils to achieve a high standard in their work. The accommodation is much improved.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*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.*

Children achieve **very well**. From average levels of ability when they enter the school, most children exceed the early learning goals in all aspects of their learning (with the exception of physical development) by the time they transfer to Year 1. In Years 1 and 2, pupils achieve

well and standards are above average in reading, writing, speaking and listening, mathematics and music. In science and ICT, pupils also achieve well and almost all pupils achieve the levels expected of them for their age. In Years 3 to 6, pupils achieve very well and standards are well above average in English and science. Pupils achieve well and standards are above average in mathematics, ICT and music. Children with special educational needs and the few who are at an early stage of learning English make very good progress towards the targets that are set for them and achieve very well.

Children's personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are **very good**. Attitudes to the school are very good. Children develop very good work habits and are keen and responsive learners. They concentrate well and show eagerness when responding to the teachers' questions. Behaviour, in and out of classrooms is very good. Children are inquisitive but polite and courteous. Children are respectful and kind to others and relationships throughout the school are excellent. Attendance is very good.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The quality of education is **very good**. Teaching and learning are **very good**. All teachers have excellent relationships with pupils, which improve pupils' confidence and help learning. In nursery and reception classes staff have a very good command of the way in which young children learn. The high quality work of support staff makes a significant contribution to the quality of learning. Assessment procedures are very good. Staff use the information gathered well to plan the next steps in pupils' learning.

The school provides a very good curriculum for its pupils. Opportunities to enhance the curriculum through educational visits, visitors and clubs to support, consolidate and enhance learning are good.

The school provides a high quality of care, support and guidance for its children. Pupils' views are taken into account whenever possible. The school's partnership with parents and the community is excellent and links with other schools are very good. Parents are provided with very useful information by the school.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Overall, leadership and management are **very good**. Leadership by the headteacher, key staff and governors are very good. This is a very hard working and dedicated team. Governors fulfil their responsibilities very well and meet their statutory requirements. Their role as critical friends who challenge senior staff is excellent. The school's evaluation of its performance through monitoring is very good. There is a very clear link between development planning and finance.

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

Parents agree that the school provides well for their children. Parents express unanimous views that the school is very caring towards their children and children are happy. Pupils love coming to school. They speak enthusiastically about their teachers and their experiences.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

The most important thing the school should do to improve is:

- Develop the role of the subject leaders in art and design, design and technology, geography, history and music.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

Overall, children achieve **very well**. They achieve **very well** in the Foundation Stage and in Years 3 to 6 and achieve **well** in Years 1 and 2. Pupils with special educational needs and pupils from all ethnic groups achieve **very well** as they progress through the school. In Year 2, standards are generally above average in English and mathematics. In Year 6, standards are well above average in English and above average in mathematics.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make a very good start in the nursery and reception classes.
- Pupils achieve well overall in Years 1 and 2 because teaching and learning are good.
- In Years 3 to 6, pupils achieve very well because teaching and learning is very good.
- High quality support enables pupils with special educational needs to achieve very well.

#### Commentary

1. Children are currently joining the school with skills in line with the levels normally expected, although the full range of ability is represented. They do however enter the school with well-developed social and emotional skills. Children make a very good start in the nursery and reception classes. They achieve very well in their personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development. They achieve well in their physical development. By the end of reception, most children have exceeded the standards expected of them in all areas of learning with the exception of physical development standards where children meet the early learning goals.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.1 (18.6)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	16.4 (18.0)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	17.3 (18.4)	16.2 (16.3)

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

2. In the 2004 national tests (table above), standards by the end of Year 2 were well above the national average in reading and writing and above average in mathematics. Compared to similar schools, standards were average in reading

and mathematics and above average in writing. Teachers' assessments in science indicated that the proportion of pupils achieving the expected level 2 was very high but the proportion achieving the higher level 3 was average. Improvements over the past four years have been better than the national picture. A very positive feature of these results was the fact that in all subjects except reading, every pupil, including those with special educational needs, achieved at least the level expected for their age.

3. Currently, pupils achieve well overall in Years 1 and 2 because teaching and learning are good. As a result, standards in reading, writing, speaking and listening, mathematics and music are currently above expectations in Year 2. Pupils also achieve well in science and ICT. Almost all pupils are achieving at least the level expected for their age.
4. The following table shows the results pupils in Year 6 attained in 2004. Compared with all schools, standards were well above average in English, above average in science and average in mathematics. Compared with similar schools, standards were above average in English and below average in mathematics and science. The four-year trend in the school's improvement in Key Stage 2 is better than the national trend. The school carefully analysed these results and were concerned that the lower attaining pupils were not achieving the expected level 4. As a result they implemented a number of developments and the results of this year's tests show a substantial improvement. For example the proportion of pupils achieving level 4 in mathematics rose from 74 per cent to 94 per cent and in English from 91 per cent to 100 per cent.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	29.1 (28.4)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	27.8 (27.4)	27.0 (26.8)
science	29.6 (29.3)	28.6 (28.6)

*There were 23 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

5. Currently pupils achieve very well in Years 3 to 6, and in Year 6 standards are well above average in reading, writing, speaking and listening and science, and above average in mathematics, ICT and music.
6. Throughout the school, there was too little evidence to make a firm judgement about standards and achievement in other subjects. However, across the curriculum some high quality work was seen.
7. Throughout the school there is currently no recorded difference between the attainment of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well because of the support they receive from teachers and support assistants and because work is set at the correct level. The high level of inclusion for these pupils is a major factor in their very good achievement. More able pupils are identified in all aspects of their work. They are suitably challenged and

supported in all other subjects, for example through more difficult and extension work, and also by visits to workshops and ICT programmes.

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

The behaviour and attitudes of pupils are **very good**. The provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **very good** overall. Attendance rates are **very good** and well above the national average. The level of unauthorised absence is similar to other schools. Punctuality to school is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' level of enjoyment and interest in all aspects of school life is very high.
- Pupils' relationships with others and their self-confidence are excellent.
- Pupils are exceptionally willing to take responsibility.
- The school is particularly highly effective in promoting pupils' moral development.
- Pupils' attendance is very good.

### **Commentary**

13. Pupils are very keen to learn and enjoy coming to school. They participate very enthusiastically and with great interest and confidence in lessons and in all aspects of school life. This includes assemblies and masses, extra-curricular activities, trips, residential visits, the school council and when they are at play. Teachers and support staff make very good provision for pupils with special educational needs and this ensures they are fully included in the life of the school. As a result they have very good attitudes to learning. They concentrate very well on their work and try very hard even when they find work challenging. Standards of behaviour in class and beyond are very good. For example, the behaviour of pupils walking to and from church and during mass was exemplary. There have been no exclusions in recent years.
14. Relationships between all members of the school community are excellent as a result of the very strong Catholic ethos that permeates the whole of school life. There is a high level of mutual respect between adults and pupils. Pupils show this when they listen carefully to adults and each other, as indeed the adults do to them. There was no indication of racist behaviour or bullying during the inspection. Pupils are very caring of each other, in class and at play, where older children help out with younger children in the playground, for example.
15. All pupils' achievements, in and out of school, are acknowledged and valued. Pupils have very good opportunities in class and around the school to take responsibility and express their opinions, and as a result are extremely confident, responsible and very good communicators, particularly older pupils. For example, they lead prayers in class and in church services. They perform in assemblies and school productions. The active school council organises a 'friendship stop' in the playground and an 'anti-bullying' week. A recent initiative was organising a successful fund raising event for the Tsunami Appeal. Pupils

are very keen to take on responsibilities such as the school council, or being monitors, or showing visitors round.

16. Pupils show very good respect for the feelings of others and they have an excellent understanding of the difference between right and wrong. Teachers provide frequent opportunities for pupils to reflect on the lives of others as well as their own. Pupils show empathy for the plight of others, as their concerned response to the recent tsunami disaster illustrates. The opportunities for social development through working together in small groups in class and in activities on residential visits and around the school are very good. The provision for cultural development is planned for across the curriculum and this leads pupils to develop a very good understanding of their own and others' cultures. This is a good improvement since the previous inspection. The provision of all these aspects within school life has a very good impact on the personal development of all pupils.

### **Attendance**

17. Attendance rates are well above national average.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	3.7	School data:	0.2
National data:	5.1	National data:	0.4

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

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is **very good** overall. Teaching and learning are **very good** and the school provides a **very good** curriculum. Assessment is **good**. The quality of care, support and guidance is **very good** and there are **excellent** links with parents and the community and **very good** links with other schools.

### Teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching and learning is **very good** throughout the school. Assessment is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- High quality teaching in the nursery and reception classes meets the needs of all children to learn independently as well as to have work organised for them.
- Lively and interesting lessons help to maintain pupils' very good attitudes.
- Teachers create a very good learning environment.
- Teachers have secure subject knowledge and have high expectations of pupils.
- Teachers link subjects together well and give opportunities for pupils to use and apply their skills.
- Teaching meets the needs of pupils with special educational needs very well.
- Good assessment ensures pupils know how well they are doing and what to do next.

### Commentary

#### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 30 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2 (7)	13 (43)	15 (50)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)

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

18. Teaching is judged to be very good overall. It is very good in the Foundation Stage, good in Years 1 and 2 and very good in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6. Parents are justifiably very pleased with the standard of teaching.

19. Teaching is consistently of a high standard in the nursery and reception classes and this promotes good learning and good achievement. Teachers and nursery nurses have a thorough understanding of the learning needs of young children. They use this to organise the classroom and the outdoor areas into a stimulating environment that, rightly, encourages play, investigation and the development of children's independence as central features. Staff work very hard to engage children in conversation. There is a very good balance between the activities children choose for themselves and those organised and supervised by the many adults who work in the Foundation Stage.
20. The key strength which characterises the effectiveness of the teaching throughout the school is the excellent relationships which all teachers and support staff share with pupils. They know pupils very well and take a keen interest in them. The pupils have respect and affection for the teachers and try their best in return. Teachers use praise and support effectively and rarely have to use their very good strategies to manage behaviour. Pupils have high self-esteem, listen to their teachers, are keen to answer questions and work hard to complete their work. The most effective lessons, especially those seen in Years 5 and 6, are lively and interesting. There is a happy and relaxed, but businesslike, atmosphere in these lessons.
21. Teachers successfully balance teaching the whole class with opportunities for enquiry, and for pupils to work independently and co-operatively. The different strategies for the organisation of groups and classes provide very good opportunities for pupils to demonstrate their progress and to refine and enhance their work. Pupils are often given good opportunities to solve problems, handle materials and use and enhance their skills and knowledge. A good feature in many lessons is the teaching of the whole class which always includes very good explanations and questioning which is aimed specifically at individuals and certain groups to promote thinking. Pupils respond enthusiastically and know that their contributions are valued. Teachers work hard to create classrooms which excite, inform, educate and motivate. There are items for pupils to look at and to answer questions about and things to touch, examine and observe. Almost every classroom has pupils' work and resources attractively displayed.
22. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and the teaching of literacy and numeracy skills is very good. In every lesson seen, teachers shared the objectives with the class at the beginning of the lesson so that pupils clearly understood what they had to do. They use the final sessions of the lessons effectively to reinforce the learning objectives and evaluate pupils' progress. Teachers plan work conscientiously and use visits and visitors to motivate and engage pupils in their learning. In the best lessons teachers have high expectations of their pupils and set challenging targets for them. However, in work scrutiny, it was clear that some teachers have been overusing worksheets which pupils can easily complete.
23. Teachers effectively find links between subjects. Pupils are given opportunities to apply their knowledge, skills and understanding, and to realise that learning is not an isolated experience. For example, in Year 6, the pupils' learned about circuits and motors and applied their skills in design and technology to create

moving fairground rides. Literacy skills are promoted very well through subjects, such as history and religious education. There is good evidence of ICT being used effectively by teachers who have access to the interactive whiteboards and pupils who research and enhance their work in mathematics and science, use the Internet to find information in their history and geography work and use the computer to produce art work in the style of Mondrian and the Aborigines for example.

24. Teachers plan very effectively for pupils with special educational needs. Work is set at levels that meet their needs and as a result pupils make very good progress both in lessons and over the longer term. Individual education plans are of a very good quality. Targets are linked very effectively to the English and mathematics aspects of the National Curriculum. Targets are specific and easily measured. They have a very positive effect on developing standards. Pupils with Statements of Special Educational Needs receive very effective support from teachers and classroom assistants, ensuring they make very good progress.
25. Assessment in the nursery and reception classes is very good and helps to create a clear picture of children's achievements in all areas of learning. In Years 1 to 6, teachers use the information about pupils' performance and achievement in English and mathematics from regular assessments and statutory and optional end-of-year tests to track pupils' progress and to intervene and help pupils to achieve even more. This is a very good development. The use of targets which are shared with pupils and parents ensures that all pupils have a good understanding about what they need to do to improve their work. The quality of marking is very good. It is generally consistent, usually related to the learning objectives, gives praise and encouragement and also guides the pupils to improve. Teachers are now assessing how well pupils are achieving in their science, ICT and other subjects, although this is at an early stage of development.

## **The curriculum**

The curriculum is **very good** overall and is enriched by a **good** range of worthwhile activities. Accommodation is **very good** and resources are **good**.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The way in which the school includes all pupils in all lessons and activities is excellent.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- The school provides very good support for learning outside the school day.
- Pupils are consistently very well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- The school provides good opportunities for pupils to take part in arts and sports activities.
- There are good links between subjects.
- The accommodation has been attractively developed to create a very good learning environment.

## Commentary

26. Children in the Foundation Stage have a very good curriculum which links together the recommended areas of learning very well. It includes religious education, which is inspected in another report. Very good use is made of the school environment and the local area to develop learning.
27. The school provides a very good quality curriculum which meets statutory requirements and also includes French for Year 5 pupils. Days with a specific focus across the school, such as a recent investigation day and a literacy day, are very successful in creating meaningful links between subjects and exciting learning opportunities for pupils. There has been good progress since the last inspection and curriculum plans are regularly monitored. Teachers incorporate in their planning effective opportunities for pupils to use their ICT skills, numeracy and literacy skills across the curriculum.
28. School staff provide very effective additional booster classes in English and mathematics in Year 6, so much so that recent results in the national tests in English, for example, exceeded expectations. Residential visits, such as to the Isle of Wight in Year 6, provide pupils with a wealth of experiences and opportunities across a range of subjects, and this enhances their learning very effectively. Similarly, the many visits such as to the local Roman Museum, and visitors to school such as a World War Two veteran, extend pupils' knowledge and understanding and interest in their studies. A good range of extra-curricular activities enhances the curriculum. These include netball, rounders, athletics, computer club, gardening, drama, guitar and recorders. In addition, pupils have regular opportunities to perform in class assemblies, church masses and school productions involving drama, music and dance and these opportunities develop their skills and their self-confidence very effectively.
29. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and as a result the pupils make very good progress. There has been very good improvement since the previous inspection in provision for pupils with special educational needs. Individual education plans are of better quality, there is more involvement of parents and pupils in target setting, and monitoring of progress is used very effectively to highlight areas of strength and for development.
30. The school monitors regularly the progress of the few Traveller pupils and those with English as an additional language in the school. Teachers take their needs into account when planning their lessons, with additional adult support where needed. As a result they achieve very well.
31. Planning is adapted to meet the needs of all pupils so that they have very good opportunities to learn. The school recognises pupils' gifts and talents in all areas, such as sports and languages, and is devising additional challenging opportunities, such as a writers' workshop. Such pupils also carry out independent activities, as when a group of Year 4 pupils produced a recent school newspaper.

32. The school prepares pupils and their parents very well for transfer to the next stage, with information and meetings at the beginning of the year. As this has been so useful to parents, children and staff, the school is extending this good practice to all years in the school.
33. Classrooms are spacious with very effective displays. Many are interactive, encouraging pupils to write comments, express opinions, ask questions and this provides an additional effective contribution to pupils' learning. The new library is spacious and well organised with a good range of books. The new ICT suite has enabled more effective teaching of skills and the application of them, across a range of subjects, as well as better opportunities for pupils to develop independent learning and research skills. The outside play areas are very good and are very well used to develop pupils' physical and social skills. The good quality resources ensure that pupils have all they need to support their learning.

### **Care, guidance and support**

The school has developed a **very good** level of care for the physical and emotional needs of its pupils. The school also provides **very good** support, advice and guidance to its pupils and **very good** opportunities for pupils to be involved in school life.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school looks after the pastoral needs of all its pupils very effectively.
- There are high quality procedures in place for health, safety and child protection.
- There is a very high level of trusting relationships that exist between pupils and adults.
- There are very good opportunities for pupils' views to be heard.

## Commentary

34. St Adrian's School looks after its pupils very well. This high level of care is underpinned by the excellent relationships that exist within the school community and the very good knowledge that all staff have of the pupils. Parents also speak very highly about this aspect of school life. They consider that the school provides a caring environment in which their children are happy and secure.
35. The school takes its responsibility for health, safety and child protection very seriously. Suitably detailed records are maintained for risk assessments, first aid, and accident recording and the governing body, through its premises committee, carries out regular inspections of the premises. The procedures for child protection are very effective and understood by all staff. Adults also provide very good supervision when pupils are walking to church or are in the playground.
36. There is a very good level of provision for the support, advice and guidance of all pupils. This is based on the very good knowledge that all adults have of individual pupils and the very trusting relationships that exist between children and adults within the school and church community.
37. Pupils also know that the school will listen to their views and concerns and those in Key Stage 2 classes use the school council very effectively. For example, they chose to initiate their own fund raising activities for the recent tsunami disaster, and raised in excess of £200 through a variety of activities.
38. Pupils with special educational needs receive very good support in school. There is very early identification of need and as a result very effective strategies to improve learning are put in place as soon as possible. Very effective programmes are put in place to address needs and as a result pupils achieve very well. Very good quality advice and support from the visiting specialists are used effectively by the school to develop learning.

## Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has developed an **excellent** partnership with its parents and the community. Links with other schools are **very good**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents and the community provide excellent support to school events.
- There is a very hard working and innovative Parent Teacher Association.
- Information provided to parents is excellent.
- The school has developed very effective business links, which are mutually beneficial.
- Very good relationships exist with other schools.

## Commentary

39. The school receives excellent benefits from its partnership with parents and the community. A considerable number of parents assist in school and on visits. Additionally there are many that help out with special jobs such as painting classrooms or printing off service sheets for school masses. There is a very hard working and very

committed PTA and they are responsible for raising approximately £10,000 a year for additional school resources through such exciting events as the family camping night, roller discos and a reunion ball for staff, governors and parents. Large numbers of parents, church members and the community support all these events. The school values the contribution that all its parents and community friends make to school life. Parents who responded to the questionnaire or who attended the meeting expressed very positive views about their involvement in school life.

40. The school has listened to the parental requests to provide more information on the progress of their children. As a result it has initiated a number of excellent improvements such as the letters on layered targets, annual reports that include grades for progress, attitude and motivation and knowledge and understanding. Parents are able to attend key stage transition evenings and the school is starting to introduce similar meetings to assist transition between year groups. Additionally, the governing body issues an excellent newsletter, which is very informative and interesting.
41. The school sees itself as an integral part of both the church and local community. Pupils play a very active part in church services and will act as servers or lead prayers in front of the congregation. Pupils also play an important part in the life of the community by regularly visiting local senior citizen's homes. Residential visits to 'The Loft' (a residential retreat and activity centre) and to the Isle of Wight are also thoroughly enjoyed by pupils. The development of a business link has become mutually beneficial as local bank staff carry out community work to support pupils through the 'Number Partner' scheme. The impact of all these partnerships is to enhance the learning opportunities for pupils.
42. Very good links exist with other local primary and secondary schools and the school is particularly proud of the integration that has taken place with a local special school. The links with the local secondary schools ensure that pupils in Year 6 are able to make the move into the next stage of their education without any concerns.
43. Parents are informed at a very early stage if their child has special educational needs. They are invited to discuss target setting on individual education plans. There are very good opportunities for parents to contribute to the target setting process. Parents are encouraged to help their children to work towards their targets at home. This has a positive effect on the very good progress made by pupils.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are **very good**. The governance of the school is **very good**. The leadership of the headteacher and other key staff is **very good**. The effectiveness of management is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher leads the school in a highly influential and motivational manner.
- There is a very good sense of teamwork and the deputy head and other key members of staff contribute significantly to the school's success.
- Recently appointed subject leaders have not yet fully monitored their subjects.

- The school shows an excellent commitment to include all pupils in all activities.
- The governors are very supportive and have a very good understanding of the school's work.
- The school's financial systems are excellently managed.

## Commentary

44. There has been very good improvement in the leadership and management of the school since the previous inspection. The headteacher provides very good leadership to the school. She has an excellent vision which ensures that there is a constant striving to improve standards in the school. She has brought all the staff with her and there is a tremendous team spirit in the school. She sets high standards both for herself and for staff and pupils. Her very good leadership has gained her the respect of pupils, staff, parents and governors.
45. Teamwork is a very good feature of the school. Staff complement each other very effectively. The deputy head teacher and senior staff support their colleagues very well. The quality of leadership and management in the core subjects of English, mathematics, science and ICT are very good. Co-ordinators use a variety of very good methods to monitor and evaluate learning, including classroom observations and analysis of work. Very good procedures are in place for analysing test and assessment data and using the information to improve learning. Leadership of special educational needs, provision for pupils with English as an additional language and provision in the Foundation Stage are very good. Leadership in art and design, design and technology, physical education, history, geography and music is good. Recent staff changes have meant that newly qualified teachers are shadowing these subjects ready to take over in September. As a result they have not yet had time to monitor their subject. The school has recognised the need to ensure that the leadership and management in these subjects match the very good leadership in the core subjects.
46. The school is totally committed to ensuring that all pupils are fully included in all aspects of the curriculum and this has a very positive impact on ensuring that all groups of pupils achieve very well. Additional support is targeted to where the need is greatest and this means that all pupils, regardless of ability, gender or ethnicity, take a full part and active role in all the school has to offer.
47. The governors give the school very good support. Their challenge and support of the senior staff are outstanding. They are very committed to raising standards of achievement and holding the school to account for the quality of education it provides. They ensure that finance and curriculum matters are very effectively monitored. ensure Governors have a very full understanding of how the school is functioning and how well pupils attain and achieve. This because they have very good and, at times, excellent links with particular subjects and aspects of school life. They have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. Governors fulfil their legal responsibilities including race and disability legislation. They comply with recent legislation on child protection and are on course to meet the legal requirements on workforce reform.
48. The management of the school is very good. Teaching and support staff are very well managed by the headteacher. Day-to-day routines are very good and office staff contribute significantly to the smooth running of the school. The most recent audit report from the local authority shows that financial management is exemplary. The school applies best value principles excellently by ensuring

Audit Commission guidelines are followed. The school carries out very high quality self-evaluation procedures. Judgements about performance are honest and accurate. When there are issues these are immediately addressed. The school improvement plan is very well thought out, with targets which move the school forward. Performance management procedures are very good and linked very effectively to whole school and individual need. This has a very positive effect on improving the quality of learning. New staff are inducted very well and the very good quality support they receive ensures that pupils in their classes receive very good support. Taking all factors in to account, the school is providing very good value for money.

**Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005**

<b>Income and expenditure (£)</b>		<b>Balances (£)</b>	
Total income	613 416	Balance from previous year	30 429
Total expenditure	610 057	Balance carried forward to the next year	33 788
Expenditure per pupil	2 641		

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

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

Provision in the Foundation Stage is **very good**.

49. Children start in the nursery class at the age of three in either September or January. They attend on a part-time basis until they enter the reception class. At the time of the inspection there were 25 children in the nursery and 30 in reception. Very good procedures ensure that children settle in quickly. Attainment covers the full ability range and is at an average level overall in all areas except personal, social and emotional development where it is higher than expected. By the time that the children are ready to start Year 1 standards exceed the nationally recommended Early Learning Goals in all areas apart from physical development where they are at the expected level, and personal, social and emotional development where they are well above expectations.
50. There has been very good improvement since the previous inspection. Links between the nursery and reception classes have been very effectively developed by the recently appointed co-ordinator and reception teacher and their support staff. The very good curriculum covers the recommended areas very well and includes religious education. Very good use is made of the school grounds and the surrounding environment to develop learning. Planning is very good and is similar in both classes. Identification and support for children with special educational needs is very good, ensuring that these children make very good progress. When children are learning to speak English as an additional language, additional very good quality support is given. Assessment is of very high quality. It is carried out very regularly and is used very effectively to develop learning. There is very good leadership and management of the Foundation Stage. There is a very good sense of teamwork. Support staff are used very effectively and have a very positive effect on developing learning. The children in the nursery and reception get off to a very good start to their education and they are prepared very well for the National Curriculum.

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

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

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

- There is a very good emphasis on developing children's independence.
- Routines are planned very effectively to develop social skills.
- Play is used very effectively to develop social and emotional development.

#### **Commentary**

51. Children enter the nursery with a wide range of social skills but the majority are at higher than expected levels. Teachers and support staff in both the nursery

and reception classes provide a wide range of very good teaching and learning activities and as a result children achieve much better than expected. Routines are clear and very well focused to develop independence. From the moment they enter the classroom to self register, children are made very welcome and valued. Independence is developed excellently in the 'Child Initiated Play' sessions in both classes. Children choose their own activities and there is an additional very good social benefit when younger nursery children play alongside the more experienced reception children. Children develop social and emotional skills very well in the role-play area such as the outdoor 'bike wash' area. All staff are excellent role models for the children: they expect high standards of behaviour and the children respond well to this. By the end of reception, standards are well above expected levels with all children exceeding the expected levels in the Early Learning Goals for children in the Foundation Stage. Children relate very well to each other and to adults, they initiate conversations and persevere at challenging tasks.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children are provided with a very good range of activities to develop early reading and writing skills.
- Children are very effectively encouraged to develop speaking and listening skills.

### **Commentary**

52. Children enter the nursery with a wide range of communication, language and literacy skills, but overall attainment is at expected levels. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. This ensures that children build up their skills, make very good progress and achieve very well. Staff provide a wide range of very good quality activities to develop communication and language skills. At the start of the morning in the nursery, small group sessions are used very effectively to develop children's speaking and listening skills. In reception there is very good challenge when children identify letter sounds. Higher attaining children are challenged very well when they write a letter inviting parents to an open day. Stories and rhymes are used very effectively and pupils are given many opportunities to handle books and this has a very positive effect on ensuring children know that print and illustrations convey meaning. Mark making and writing skills are developed very effectively, with higher attaining children writing relatively complex sentences. Children with special educational needs are very well supported and as a result make very good progress. Children with English as an additional language achieve very well because of the support they receive from staff. Role-play is used very effectively to develop communication and language skills. By the end of reception children attain at above the expected levels with many exceeding the expected Early Learning Goals. Higher attaining children read and write sentences including words such as 'exhibition'.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers use a very good range of learning activities to develop mathematical understanding.
- Mathematical development is linked very well to other areas of learning.

## **Commentary**

53. Children enter the nursery with mathematical skills at the expected level. There is very good quality teaching and learning. As a result all groups of children make very good progress and achieve very well. In both the nursery and reception teachers plan mathematical development sessions very well. There is a very good emphasis on practical mathematics such as working in the shop to handle money or counting spots. There are very good mathematical links to the 'mini-beast' topic. Adults develop addition and subtraction skills very effectively when 'ladybirds' land and fly away from leaves. Number songs and rhymes are used very effectively to develop counting skills. The higher attaining children carry out more formal addition problems, recognising addition and equal signs. By the end of reception children exceed the expected Early Learning Goals.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Practical activities are used very effectively to develop learning.
- Very good use is made of the school environment to develop children's knowledge and understanding.
- Teachers plan activities very well.

## **Commentary**

54. Children enter nursery with expected levels of knowledge and understanding of the world. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. Children achieve very well because teachers and support assistants plan and provide very good quality activities to develop an understanding of the world about them. The school gardens are used very effectively to develop an understanding of how things grow and the beauty of plants and flowers. Many different types of construction kits are used very well to allow children to build and make models. Children achieve very well in the area of ICT because they are given activities involving computers and programmable construction kits. Planning shows that children learn about religious education: this is inspected in another report. Children have good knowledge and understanding of people from other cultures. By the time they leave reception children attain higher than expected levels showing particularly good knowledge and understanding of scientific, technological and ICT aspects of this area.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in physical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Resources are used effectively to develop learning.

- Child initiated play sessions are used very effectively to develop learning.
- Very good attention is paid to the effects of exercise on the body.
- There are times when children are not fully active in physical education sessions.

## **Commentary**

55. Children enter the nursery with skills at the expected level. There is good teaching and learning and as a result children achieve well. The outdoor area is used very effectively to develop physical skills such as cycling and running. The climbing equipment in other areas of school gives children very good experiences in adventurous and climbing skills. In formal physical education sessions teachers question children very well to ensure that they understand why they have carried out a warm up and what effect it has on their heart. Children develop their throwing and catching skills effectively because teachers provide a range of good quality resources. At times children remain inactive too long after the initial warm up and as a result there is a little time loss. When they leave reception the majority of children have attained the expected Early Learning Goals.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in creative development is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Adults provide a very good range of activities.
- Creative development is very well planned.

## **Commentary**

56. Children develop their creative skills very well because teaching and learning are very good. There is very good achievement in both the nursery and reception. The activities provided stimulate and interest the children. They are closely linked to other areas of the curriculum and reinforce learning in the 'mini-beast' topic. Activities including producing collages, colour mixing and painting very impressive paintings in the style of famous artists have a very positive effect on developing pupils' creative skills. Teachers plan very well to ensure that all aspects of creative development are covered including all aspects of music and dance. By the time they leave reception, almost all children exceed the expected Early Learning Goals.

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

### **ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE**

#### **English**

Provision in English is **very good**.

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

- Pupils achieve very well in their time at the school because of the very good teaching.

- Very good leadership has helped raise and maintain standards.
- Pupils respond very well to the very good opportunities they have to learn.
- Assessment systems are very well used to help pupils improve.

## Commentary

57. Pupils achieve well from their starting points to achieve above average expectations in speaking and listening and writing, and well above average in reading, by the end of Year 2. This is due to the good teaching and the very good emphasis in Years 1 and 2 on acquiring the basic reading and writing skills. This current attainment matches the standards pupils reached in national tests in 2003 and 2004, except for writing which is above average expectations, rather than well above average, because of a higher level of special educational needs in the year group than in the previous two years. However, numbers of pupils achieving the higher levels in reading increased this year to nearly half of all pupils. This was due to an effective initiative targeted at more able readers. Those achieving the higher levels in writing remained well above average. With this good start in Years 1 and 2, and very good teaching as they move up the school, pupils achieve very well. As a result, by Year 6 pupils' speaking and listening, reading and writing are all well above average expectations, as they were in 2003 and 2004 national tests. The fact that in the most recent tests, all pupils achieved the expected level, with nearly half achieving the higher levels, is as a result of the very effective additional targeted support in 'booster' classes for a few pupils in Year 6.
58. Teaching and learning are very good overall. All lessons seen were either good or better and this has a positive impact on achievement. Teaching is planned very carefully to cater for the needs of all pupils in the class, including the few Traveller children and pupils with English as an additional language in the school. Staff provide very effective support and a very good level of challenge to ensure all achieve very well. Very good systems are in place for pupils with special educational needs. They achieve very well because teaching assistants provide very effective support, engaging the pupils in planned activities in line with their individual education plans. Lessons are well paced which keeps pupils listening and involved. Teachers make very clear to pupils what they expect them to learn in lessons, and involve pupils in reviewing how successful they think they have been in meeting those expectations. They make frequent reference to pupils' reading and writing targets in class and teachers' comments in their books help pupils know how to improve. Teachers praise pupils' efforts and enjoy very good relationships with them. They set high expectations which pupils work hard to meet. Older pupils say they feel they have exciting opportunities to learn because teachers use a variety of methods to help them understand. For example, pupils work in pairs and independently; they explain things on the board and to each other and this helps them understand. Pupils think they do so well because teachers encourage them so much.
59. The subject is very well led and managed. The co-ordinator, with the support of the link governor, has a very good overview of provision in the subject and is open to new ideas and initiatives. Very good systems are already in place and working well and consistently across all classes. Planning and teaching are regularly monitored, pupils' books sampled, their progress tracked, pieces of work assessed regularly according to National Curriculum levels and pupils' performance in tests analysed. This analysis has led to identifying areas for development in reading and writing across the school. A new system of targets has recently been adopted with these areas as the focus. Such recent initiatives are already in place and are being successful in helping to increase pupils' awareness of how they can improve. Planned developments in the subject

include more innovative projects which offer challenge and interest to higher attaining pupils. With the high standards being maintained and the very good improvement in teaching due to the very effective systems that have been put in place, improvement since the last inspection has been very good. The good provision in the new library and ICT suite offer good resources and opportunities to extend pupils' learning.

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

60. Teachers make very good use of opportunities across the curriculum to develop pupils' literacy skills very effectively. Teachers teach and display specialist vocabulary in different subjects, as, for example, in mathematics in Year 5, the key words for the week, 'horizontal', 'vertical' and 'frequency'. A very successful whole school literacy day emphasised the role of literacy in its different forms for different purposes, across a wide range of activities, which pupils were very enthusiastic about.

### **Modern foreign language (French)**

61. Due to limited opportunities, this area has been sampled and is not reported in full. The school has significantly developed its modern language provision by embracing partnerships with the nearby secondary school. All pupils in Year 5 are receiving regular good quality teaching in French and parents commented that they would like to see this provision extended to other classes. In the one lesson seen, the teacher communicated an enthusiasm for learning that pupils readily identified with, so that they learnt well as they answered simple questions and learned how to describe the weather in French.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Very good analysis and self-evaluation in mathematics have led to improved standards.
- There has been very good improvement in investigative mathematics and pupils use and apply their skills well in other subjects.
- High quality teaching has promoted very good achievement for pupils of all abilities.
- Very good leadership and management ensure that the quality of education continues to rise.

### **Commentary**

62. In national tests for seven year olds in 2004, all pupils, including those with Special educational needs, attained the level expected at age seven. This standard is very high compared with the national average and also with similar schools. In the national tests for eleven year olds, in 2004, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected level was similar to the national average but below average when judged against schools of similar type. The proportion exceeding the expected levels for their age in the tests was above average in Year 2 and Year 6. The school was disappointed in the results of pupils in Year 6 and through analysis of the tests and the involvement of numeracy

consultants many changes were made in an effort to increase the proportion of pupils achieving the expected level in Year 6. Results have improved considerably this year and the proportion of pupils achieving level 4 in 2004 (74 per cent) has now risen to 94 per cent in the national tests in 2005. Current evidence shows that attainment is above average in Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils are closely involved in the development of each stage of the lesson and very good organisation enables teachers to spend quality time working with individuals or groups. This is a significant factor contributing to pupils' high achievement. Planning for progression through the various mathematical topics is focused sharply on the targets set for pupils of different ability levels. Progress made by all pupils is similar and all pupils have equal access to the curriculum.

63. When the school was evaluating the progress pupils made in mathematics a weakness in using and applying mathematics was highlighted. The school implemented changes to planning and introduced investigative work on a regular basis. Pupils enjoy this approach and there is now a noticeable improvement in confidence and in the transference of skills to other aspects of mathematics. Pupils are progressively learning to question and give reasons for their answers, which also reinforces understanding of mathematical terminology. An impressive feature in almost every lesson is the very structured approach to work where pupils can use a wide range of mathematical ideas with equal success. Throughout the school, pupils benefit from practice in investigative mathematics. This is a significant improvement on the last inspection and is developing further as teachers prepare many opportunities for challenging and independent work. When pupils are provided with these opportunities they respond well, their attitudes are very good and they work very well together, listening to and learning from each other. A very good example of this was a Year 6 lesson in which pupils were asked to use a bus timetable to organise a day out on the Isle of Wight. This was a particularly relevant and interesting task since pupils had only recently been there to enjoy a residential visit.
64. The quality of teaching and learning is very good, overall. It is good in Years 1 and 2 and very good in Years 3 to 6. In every lesson, effective questioning is used to challenge pupils and extend pupils' knowledge. Pupils are grouped by prior attainment and all pupils are set challenging targets. Higher attaining pupils are given opportunities to do more difficult extension work whilst lower attaining pupils are supported by teaching assistants and other adults. The very good link with a local finance company, brought about by the involvement of the mathematics governor, has been a fruitful relationship and has helped to improve standards as volunteers engage pupils in mathematical activities. Furthermore, in Year 2, parents regularly support pupils and play mathematical games. This helps to improve standards and also helps to develop pupils' enjoyment in the subject. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress due to highly focused support from teachers and assistants. In an excellent lesson in Year 5, the teacher encouraged pupils to explain their reasoning as they worked out problems on the Interactive Whiteboard at the front of the class. Teachers promote the development of ICT skills whenever opportunities arise and programs are often well used to complement the main thrust of the lesson. Homework supports classwork very well and provides good opportunities to consolidate pupils' understanding.
65. Leadership and management of the subject are very good. The evaluation work completed by the mathematics governor is excellent. The subject co-ordinator has introduced a number of curriculum changes and encouraged the sharing of expertise through the monitoring of teaching. Teachers' planning is carefully monitored to ensure that there is a close match of work to pupils' abilities and needs. Teachers have worked effectively as a team to support the development of systematic assessment procedures. Standards of marking are very good overall. At its best, marking is helpful

and constructive and because it makes reference to the learning objective pupils are aware of how well they are doing and what they can do improve their work. Since the previous inspection, standards of attainment have risen. There is good capacity for further improvement, particularly for higher attaining pupils, through the continuation of using the highly focused targets in planning and continuing emphasis on the application of mathematics.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

66. Mathematics is used well to support other subjects of the curriculum. Pupils transfer number skills, measuring skills, computational work and use graphical and statistical skills to complement work especially in science, design and technology and geography.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers provide very good opportunities for pupils to develop their enquiry and investigative skills.
- Teaching takes very good account of differing abilities of pupils.
- The subject leader analyses areas of strength and weakness very well.

### **Commentary**

67. Pupils achieve very well in science because of very good quality teaching and learning. The most recent published tests national tests and teacher assessments show that standards are above average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Inspection evidence shows that the present Year 2 group is attaining at average levels. This is below the level of the previous group because of an increased number of lower attainers in the present cohort. The number attaining beyond the expected level has increased. By the end of Year 6 standards are above average, with well over half the pupils attaining above the expected level. Inspection evidence shows no difference in the achievement of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported and as a result they make very good progress.
68. The quality of teaching and learning is very good overall. It is never less than good and is consistently very good or better in Years 3 to 6. Teachers have a very secure understanding of the subject, which enables them to plan interesting and enjoyable activities. There is a very good balance between developing pupils' investigative skills alongside scientific knowledge. Very good use is made of allowing pupils to apply their scientific knowledge and understanding to other subject areas such as making moving fairground rides in Year 6. Teachers plan to meet the needs of different groups of pupils very effectively. They pay particularly good attention to the targets on pupils' individual education plans. During the inspection period there was a very high level of challenge which developed learning very well. Analysis of previous work

shows that in the past there has been an over-reliance on worksheets in some classes. This has now been addressed and learning in all lessons is now at least good and almost always very good. Occasionally the quality of teaching is excellent. In the excellent lessons, teachers celebrate the beauty of nature as they provide wonderful activities involving real and artificial plants. All teachers expect pupils to behave well and the pupils respond by showing very good and at times excellent attitudes to their learning. Visits out from school are used very effectively to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of areas such as food chains and food webs.

69. The leadership and management of the subject are very good. The subject co-ordinator is committed to raising standards even higher. There is very effective analysis of data to identify areas for development and these are very successfully addressed. There has been very good quality monitoring of teaching and learning and analysis of pupils' work. The results of the monitoring have been used very effectively to raise levels of achievement.
70. There has been very good improvement since the previous inspection when aspects of science were key issues. There is now a good quality curriculum in place that fully meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. The quality of teaching and learning has improved very well and there is a much greater emphasis on providing activities which develop pupils' investigative skills.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is good and as a result pupils achieve well and standards are rising.
- Leadership and management of the subject are very good.
- Links with ICT in other subjects of the curriculum are good.

### **Commentary**

71. ICT has been a key priority for school development over the past few years and as a result there has been very good improvement in the provision for the subject. This is due to considerable staff expertise, a significant investment in hardware, software and accommodation; a very strong commitment to the subject at senior management level; and pupils' very positive attitudes to ICT. The school has dealt well with the issues raised in the last report and pupils' skills in the control aspect of ICT have improved significantly due to staff training and improved teaching. Overall standards are in line with those expected of pupils at the end of Year 2 and above expectations in Year 6. Standards are rising, particularly in Years 3 to 6 because for these pupils the developments in the subject have been in place for long enough to impact on their knowledge, skills and understanding. All pupils, including those with special educational needs achieve well. There is no difference in the attainment of girls and boys.

72. The quality of teaching is good overall. Most teachers are skilled users of ICT. This level of expertise and confidence is the result of the staff's commitment to ICT. A high level of effective training has been provided both in the use of computers, interactive whiteboards and the use of a variety of software. Thorough planning ensures all pupils are sufficiently challenged and incorporates the use of a range of high quality resources. For example, pupils throughout the school use digital cameras to record their achievements and insert images to illustrate their narrative writing and other work. Pupils are knowledgeable about the advantages and some of the disadvantages of using modern technology. They are especially secure in using ICT to collect and present information. They express their views with good command of technical vocabulary and pupils in Years 3 to 6 are very familiar with a range of websites for researching information for various subjects. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' conduct in their classes and ensure that expensive equipment is treated with care. Pupils behave very well in lessons. Assessment procedures are now becoming established and teachers are aware of what they need to do next to move learning forward.
73. The subject is very well led and managed. The subject leader ensures that training is provided for the use of any new equipment and software acquired by the school to ensure the best use of very expensive resources. Practical organisation and management of resources are very good. The future plans for further development are based on a thorough audit of school needs and the action plan reflects their very good subject knowledge, which underpins high expectations for the subject.

#### **Information and communication technology across the curriculum**

74. Cross-curricular provision is good. Time in the computer suite is allocated to all classes and is well focused on developing cross-curricular links with a range of subjects. In almost all the lessons, teachers and pupils make very good use of the technology available with interactive whiteboards. ICT skills are used very effectively to promote literacy and numeracy skills. For example, higher attaining Year 4 pupils have independently produced a newsletter and data handling skills are commonly used in science. Year 6 pupils inserted scanned images into their multimedia presentation of John Lennon and a presentation about their school which is shown in the entrance hall. Links with history, geography, art and design and design and technology are particularly good. Pupils are given specific instructions about what to search on the Internet to ensure that time is used efficiently with a sharp focus on maximising learning opportunities.

#### **HUMANITIES**

75. No lessons were seen in **geography** or **history**. Therefore, it is not possible to form an overall judgement about standards and provision in these subjects. Evidence was gathered from teachers' planning, samples of pupils' work and discussions with staff and pupils. These indicate that pupils have access to a

curriculum that follows national guidelines. Religious education is to be inspected separately under Section 23 by the Diocese.

76. In **geography**, pupils in Year 2 distinguish between physical and human features at the seaside. They classify cities, the seaside and the countryside by their geographical features, showing a good understanding. In Year 4, pupils develop their observational and research skills when finding out about improving the environment both around school and in the local area. They use a digital camera and sketches to collect first-hand evidence and present their findings using spreadsheets and graphs, making good use of ICT. A residential visit to the Isle of Wight in Year 6 affords pupils good opportunities to develop their mapping and research skills. They work out routes on maps of the island and directions, using scale to calculate distances. They show understanding of the impact of erosion on the island, and that chalk is a soft rock that erodes easily.
77. In **history**, different periods are brought to life by visits or visitors and this enhances pupils' historical understanding. A visit to a local toy museum in Year 1 and making a replica of an old-fashioned toy, supports pupils' understanding of the passing of time, and of the differences in toys between then and now. Pupils in Year 6 are fascinated to find out so much about the way of life of Queen Victoria's nine children from their visit to Swiss Cottage on the Isle of Wight. How children lived and the conditions in World War Two formed a good contrast to that, as pupils tried to imagine, for example, the impact of rationing on children's lives, and interviewing a local visitor who had been in the VE Day Parade. By Year 6 pupils develop an understanding of chronology of the different periods studied. Pupils' independent research skills develop well due to the good opportunities in the subject.

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

78. No lessons were observed in **art and design, design and technology** or **physical education**. These subjects were sampled and no overall judgement on provision was made.
79. In **art and design**, analysis of teachers' planning, discussions with pupils and the subject leader show that all aspects of the subject are being covered. Pupils are provided with a wide range of activities which develop both two- and three-dimensional work. There is a very strong emphasis on comparing the styles of different artists. Very well presented displays show work of good quality in all year groups. The subject co-ordinator shows a good understanding of the needs of the subject but as she is just finishing her newly qualified teacher period, she has not been in a position to monitor the subject throughout school.
80. In **design and technology**, evidence of present and past work and school displays show pupils are making products where the quality at least meets the standards typically expected for their age, some is of high quality. It is clear from planning and completed work that all that should be taught is taught. There are examples of pupils designing, making and evaluating and improving their models. A positive feature of much of their work is the link with other subjects,

especially for example designing Tudor houses in history and making musical instruments which linked science and music. Teachers regularly search for links and explore the use of ICT to support pupils' learning.

81. In Year 1, pupils make pictures with a moving feature and prepare fruit salad. By Year 2 pupils learn how to make vehicles by joining components in a variety of ways. Pupils have learned how to draw up a design brief that records their choices of materials and the tools they intend to use. Some pupils reflect on the finished product and write down their ideas of how it might be improved.
82. In Year 5, pupils have applied their design skills to food technology by planning and baking biscuits and in a good link with history, Year 3 pupils designed and made a moving mythological monster. By Year 6 pupils design and make moving fairground rides. This builds well on the link with science and the use of electrical circuits. Pupils' involvement in pairs in these activities helps promote their social development and encourages team-building skills.
83. In **physical education**, planning and discussion with pupils and the subject leader show that all aspects of physical education are covered. Pupils perform better than expected in swimming with almost all swimming at least 25 metres and many swimming well beyond that distance. Links with local sports clubs including Saracens Rugby Club and the local sports college have a very positive impact on developing physical skills. A residential session for Year 5 pupils includes orienteering and other adventurous activities. Older pupils have many opportunities to play in competitive sports fixtures. The subject co-ordinator leads the subject well and has been instrumental in providing many of the well-attended after school clubs.

## Music

Provision in music is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching is leading to good achievement.
- Lessons provide a good range of activities to enthuse pupils and develop their skills, knowledge and understanding.
- Opportunities for pupils to appraise music are sometimes restricted.

### Commentary

84. The school has maintained the quality of provision in music since the previous inspection. Singing continues to be good throughout the school. Throughout the school, pupils are provided with good opportunities for performing, composing and listening. By the time pupils leave school they sing with expression and control of pitch. They have a good knowledge of composers gained through music played in assemblies and at other times. Appraisal is not as strong based on the evidence seen. Occasionally, however, pupils are not being asked for their views and opinions of the music and are told for example that *Morning Mood* by Grieg and *The Swan* by Saint Saens are “lovely pieces of music”. There is insufficient questioning of pupils to ascertain pupils’ own appraisals. However, standards overall are above average in Years 2 and 6.
85. Teaching and learning are good and as a result, pupils make good progress and achieve well throughout the school. All three lessons observed during the inspection were taught by the specialist music teacher, who is also the subject leader. Pupils respond positively to music lessons, listening attentively and reacting sensitively. They build up a good range of musical vocabulary over time and progressively improve their skills in instrumental work by playing individually, in groups and as a whole class. There is a good supply of tuned and non-tuned instruments to encourage participation, which includes instruments for world music. Pupils appreciate singing and performing in school productions and concerts. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 performed to a high standard when singing and ‘playing’ rhythms using ‘instruments’ such as pots, pans, brushes and basketballs! They value opportunities to learn more about music from different cultures. For example, pupils in Year 6 listened to the music from a variety of African countries and wrote some mature evaluations and opinions of what they heard. Such experiences support pupils’ very good cultural development. Those pupils who choose to participate in extra-curricular musical activities make good progress in playing recorders, guitars, clarinet and flute. The school benefits from the help of specialist teachers from the Hereford Music Support Service.
86. Leadership of music is good and management is satisfactory. The school uses a scheme of work which provides every pupil with a sound basis for the enjoyment of music for pleasure and possible higher level study. Music makes a significant contribution to the life of the school and the community. The range of activities, especially those connected to religious festivals, contributes significantly to the school’s ethos and the pupils’ learning. With evidence from singing in mass, assemblies and observations of instrumental lessons, teaching is good. The specialist teacher has secure musical knowledge and understanding and is confident to demonstrate skills to the pupils. This helps to inspire pupils with confidence and ambition. However, assessment, although satisfactory, is at an early stage of development. It is somewhat

limited because the subject leader does not ensure she has detailed knowledge of the developments being made, especially of pupils who are taught flute and clarinet.

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

87. This subject was sampled. Pupils receive a full and interesting curriculum that helps to support their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well. For example, pupils have a very good understanding of the school rules, and very good awareness of others through 'circle time', religious education lessons and assemblies. Sex and relationships education is taught sensitively through the science curriculum, religious education lessons and circle time. The school is committed to healthy lifestyles such as healthy eating and regular exercise, which are encouraged through science, physical education and after school activities. Geography and current affairs' lessons provide pupils with opportunities to discuss environmental issues such as the effects of pollution, severe weather and natural disasters such as the tsunami. Pupils have a very good understanding of the needs of others and support charities both locally and further afield, not just by funding but by performing for local senior citizens, for example. The children themselves raise money. At the instigation of the school's council, pupils raised £200 through a talent competition for the Tsunami Appeal.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement	Grade
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
How inclusive the school is	1
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	2
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>2</b>
Pupils' achievement	2
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)</b>	<b>2</b>
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>2</b>
The quality of teaching	2
How well pupils learn	2
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	2
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	1
The quality of the school's links with the community	1
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
<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	2
The effectiveness of management	2

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