

INSPECTION REPORT

Saint Stephen's Roman Catholic Primary School

Droylsden

Manchester

LEA area: Tameside

Unique reference number: 106253

Headteacher: Raymond Morris

Lead inspector: Stafford Evans

Dates of inspection: 18 to 21 April 2005

Inspection number: 267946

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 - 11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 429

School address: Chappell Road
Droylsden
Manchester
Lancashire
Postcode: M43 7NA

Telephone number: 0161 3702071
Fax number: 0161 3014259

Appropriate authority: Governing body
Name of chair of governors: Reverend Father Fallon

Date of previous inspection: 18th June 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Saint Stephen's is a Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided primary school. The school is much larger than most primary schools found nationally. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is in line with the national average. Attainment on entry is in line with that expected of children entering nursery education. Less than one per cent of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds. No pupil speaks English as an additional language. The school very recently admitted a very small number of Traveller pupils. There are 15 per cent of pupils identified as having special educational needs. This is in line with the national average. Three pupils have a statement of special educational need. At under one per cent of pupils in the school, it is below the national average.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21217	Stafford Evans	Lead inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Physical education
11450	Lee Kuraishi	Lay inspector	
21020	Tess Galvin	Team inspector	English as an additional language English Art and design Design and technology
10228	Susan Russam	Team inspector	Special educational needs Science Geography History
22740	Margaret Leah	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Citizenship Music

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Saint Stephen's is a good school that gives good value for money. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils attain standards that are above the national average in English, mathematics and science. The teaching and learning are good, as are the leadership and management of the school. The school's provision for pupils' personal development is very good.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- pupils achieve well by the time they leave the school;
- provision in the Foundation Stage is good;
- the quality of teaching is good, with a significant amount of very good and excellent teaching;
- pupils' personal development, behaviour, attitudes to learning and attendance rate are very good;
- not all higher attainers achieve as well as they should in writing;
- the school provides a good range of learning opportunities for pupils;
- the arrangements for teaching some pupils with special educational needs mean that they miss some lessons that their classmates have.

The school has made good improvement since the last inspection. Standards are higher in English, information and communication technology (ICT), design and technology and music. Children in the Foundation Stage now make good progress compared with satisfactory at the time of the last inspection. The key issues for improvement have been dealt with successfully. Teaching and learning have improved. Pupils' personal development is better. Outdoor play provision is very much improved. Although improvements have been made in English standards, there is room for improvement in writing. The leadership and management of subject co-ordinators are better, but the monitoring of pupils' work is not rigorous enough. All statutory requirements are now met.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

Standards of achievement are good. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils achieve well in relation to their capabilities in English, mathematics and science. Exceptions are the higher attainers who do not achieve as well as they should in writing. Pupils make good progress in English, mathematics and science by the time they leave the school. This is an improvement when compared with the similar school grades from the 2004 national tests. Very nearly all pupils leave the school able to read at the nationally expected standard. Higher attaining pupils in mathematics achieve very well. Pupils have good literacy and numeracy skills and use them well in other subjects. Standards in ICT are above national expectations and improving at a good pace. Pupils achieve very well in ICT. Pupils identified as having special educational needs achieve well in relation to their capabilities.

Pupils' personal development is very good because provision for their spiritual, moral and social development is very good, and good for their cultural development.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching and learning are good, with a significant amount of very good and excellent teaching. Procedures for assessing pupils' work are satisfactory and teachers make satisfactory use of the information to plan lessons. Teachers generally mark pupils' work satisfactorily. This means that pupils have a sound knowledge of their own learning and how they can improve. However, some work in English, science and geography fails to provide guidance on how pupils can improve their work. Pupils identified as having special educational needs are taught well. Good use of skilled support staff ensures that pupils who need help in lessons receive it most of the time and therefore make good use of their time. The teaching of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy is good. Teachers plan the development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects well. Teachers use computers well to help pupils learn.

Curriculum provision is good. The school enhances pupils' learning through a very good range of extra-curricular activities. The care pupils receive is good. However, when pupils with special educational needs are withdrawn from class for extra help they miss part of some lessons. Thus, they do not have the same access to the whole curriculum as their classmates.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher provides good leadership in setting the tone for the school in which pupils can learn effectively. He creates a caring and supportive atmosphere within the school, which in turn promotes a good team spirit and makes the school a good place to come to and learn. The headteacher is ably supported by a competent deputy headteacher. Subject co-ordinators make a good contribution to the success of the school. The management of the school is good. The school has effective procedures for the evaluation of its work, but the school improvement plan does not have clear enough methods of measuring the success or otherwise of its developments. The governance of the school is good. Governors are well organised and led, and thorough in their approach. They have a good grasp of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and play an important part in helping to shape its work. The school complies with all statutory requirements.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very satisfied with the work of the school. They expressed no concerns about any aspect of its work. The school has good links with parents, who support it well.

Pupils think very highly of the school. They say they like school very much, their views are valued and they are treated fairly and with respect.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- raise standards in writing;
- improve the organisation of special educational needs support to ensure that all pupils have equal access to all lessons.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Achievement is **good** throughout the school. The standards pupils attain are above average in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. They are average in mathematics and science, and below average in English by the end of Year 2.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Reading standards are very good by the time pupils leave the school.
- In mathematics, higher attaining pupils achieve very well.
- Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress and achieve well.
- Pupils attain standards above national expectations in ICT and achieve very well.
- Higher attainers do not achieve as well as they should in writing.

Commentary

Foundation Stage

1. Children enter the nursery classes with early skills that are in line with those expected of children this age. By the end of reception, children's achievement is good. They attain above nationally expected standards in their personal, social and emotional development. They attain nationally expected standards in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development.

Years 1 and 2

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	17.2 (16.1)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	16.1 (14.9)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	18.5 (17.2)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 56 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. Pupils achieve well in relation to their capabilities by the end of Year 2 compared with the time they leave the Foundation Stage. They make good progress in their lessons. Inspection evidence indicates that standards in reading, mathematics and science are in line with the national average. They are below average in writing. This is significantly lower than the 2004 national test results. This is because the current Year 2 has a much higher proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs compared with the 2004 group. Thirty-three per cent of pupils have special educational needs, whereas last year's group of pupils had less than 5 per cent. Pupils attain above national expectations in ICT and achieve very well.

Years 3 - 6

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.9 (27.6)	26.9 (26.8)

Mathematics	28.5 (28.7)	27.0 (26.8)
Science	29.6 (29.8)	28.6 (28.6)

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

3. Inspection evidence indicates that, by the end of Year 6, standards are above the national average in English, mathematics and science. By the end of Year 6, pupils achieve well in relation to their capabilities. They make good progress in lessons in Years 3 to 6. The exception to this is the underachievement in writing of higher attaining pupils. The trend in national test results since the last inspection is above the national trend. Until 2004, standards in comparison with similar schools nationally were also above the national trend. Higher attainers not achieving as well as expected caused the dip. This has been rectified this year in mathematics and science, but work still needs to be done in writing. Reading standards are a strength of the school. Last year, all pupils attained the nationally expected standard. Another strength this year is the very good achievement of the higher attainers in mathematics. There is no significant difference in the standards achieved by boys and girls.
4. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 attain standards that are above national expectations in ICT and design and technology. They achieve very well in relation to their capabilities. In class lessons, pupils with special educational needs achieve as well as their classmates. In relation to their prior attainment they achieve well. However, they do not make sufficient progress when they miss parts of lessons in a variety of subjects when they receive additional help to develop their literacy and numeracy skills. Whilst the small number of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs make progress in relation to their individual targets, it is erratic and inconsistent. This is because they are not always given enough specific individual help.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Attendance is **well above average** and punctuality is **very good**. Pupils' attitudes to learning and behaviour are **very good**. The wide range of experiences planned for pupils promotes very good spiritual, moral, social development and good cultural development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good relationships are at the centre of the school's work.
- Pupils are keen and enthusiastic learners.
- The school's high expectations of pupils' behaviour promote a purposeful and calm learning environment.
- Close links with the church foster spiritual development particularly well.

Commentary

5. The school's mission statement is often used as a prayer and is well known to pupils. It emphasises the intention, 'to nurture values of love, care and respect'. This sets the tone for the strong caring relationships throughout the school. Teachers listen with respect to pupils' ideas and display their work attractively. Consequently pupils grow in confidence and self-esteem. They are sensitive in their judgement of others, for instance, providing and receiving constructive criticism maturely. Older pupils are keen to help younger ones and often choose to do this as a reward.
6. Pupils enjoy coming to school and have very good attitudes to learning. Pupils are enthusiastic learners because teachers plan interesting lessons which motivate pupils

very well. Pupils respond very positively to the teachers' high expectations and to strategies such as working against the clock. Almost all pupils apply themselves successfully and do their best. Extra-curricular activities are well attended and older pupils are especially proud to represent the school in a wide range of sporting events.

7. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good. The school clearly communicates to pupils its high expectations of responsible behaviour. Simple and positive rules are prominently displayed in all classrooms and consistently and fairly applied. As a result, all know what is expected of them and strive to conform. Behaviour in the playground and the dining room is very good. Playground space is carefully organised and games equipment provided so that pupils have plenty to do. Pupils share space and equipment sensibly. Any rare challenging behaviour is quickly dealt with and the incident used effectively to reinforce school values. Pupils show empathy for those less fortunate than themselves by joining in or initiating collections and events. Issues surrounding moral dilemmas, feelings and relationships are explored sensitively in personal, social and health education and religious education lessons. Pupils become increasingly able to see another's point of view as they move through the school. There have been no exclusions for six years.
8. Spiritual development is fostered very well, particularly through the school's strong Roman Catholic ethos and its close links with the church of Saint Stephen. The annual retreat for pupils in Year 6 is sensitively arranged to provide opportunities for self-knowledge and for gaining a deeper understanding of their faith. Assemblies provide very good opportunities for pupils to reflect on their own place in the world and on their responsibilities towards others.
9. The school makes very good provision for pupils to develop social skills. Pupils in all classes respond well to opportunities to carry out minor administrative tasks in class and around school. In class, teachers promote co-operative skills successfully by providing many opportunities for pupils to work in pairs and groups. The school council gives everyone experience of democracy at work as they vote for their representative. Particularly good attention is given to developing pupils' sense of responsibility for looking after the environment. This is reflected in several Eco initiatives which involve pupils practically, for example in recycling paper or planting trees.
10. Provision for cultural development is good. There has been improvement since the previous inspection particularly in the teaching about non-western cultures. The curriculum is enhanced by visitors and by visits. Studies in history, for instance of the Victorians, help promote pupils' awareness of their heritage. Non-western cultures are represented by studies of Aboriginal art and Rangoli patterns. The religious education curriculum has been extended so that pupils now gain awareness of the world faiths of Islam, Judaism and Hinduism. However, the pupils' awareness of Britain as a multi-cultural society is not well developed.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	3.2	School data:	0.0
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.

11. Attendance is well above the national average and most pupils are punctual. The very good levels of attendance and pupils' punctuality provide a basis for the good progress pupils make.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is **good**. Teaching and learning are **good**. There is a **good** curriculum. The school provides a **good** level of care for its pupils. Links with parents and community are **good** and **very good** with other schools.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **good**, with a significant amount of very good and excellent lessons.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Lesson planning and organisation are good.
- Teachers encourage pupils to want to learn.
- Teachers use a good range of teaching methods and this leads to a good level of interest from pupils.
- There is good use of ICT to help pupils learn.
- In writing lessons, higher attainers do not have sufficient time to write work of a quality of which they are capable.

Commentary

12. Lessons, including in English and mathematics, are well planned and teachers make clear what they want pupils to learn by sharing it with the pupils at the start of lessons. Assessment procedures are satisfactory and used to sound effect by teachers. This means that work is matched to pupils' needs and what they need to learn next. A variety of good teaching approaches and classroom organisation is used to suit what pupils are expected to learn in the lesson. There is usually a good and balanced use of explanation, discussion and practical activity. As a result, the learning for most pupils is enjoyable as well as effective. The pace in most lessons is brisk and purposeful, and pupils produce a lot of work. The teachers succeed in raising pupils' self-esteem through good use of praise and encouragement. Pupils' contributions are valued. The resultant very good relationships provide the cornerstone for the teachers' management of pupils' behaviour. Pupils respond by behaving well in lessons and doing a lot of good work.
13. Resources are used effectively to help pupils learn. For example, teachers make good use of ICT to help pupils learn in other subjects. There is good planned access to the computer suite for groups of pupils to complete work that enhances their learning. Also, teachers use computer-controlled whiteboards to introduce new skills to pupils in a wide range of subjects. This highly motivates pupils to want to learn and holds their attention well. Teachers plan the use of teaching assistants well. The assistants help pupils by providing good support, ideas and motivation so that during lessons pupils work hard and complete a lot of work.
14. Teachers usually have high expectations and a good knowledge of the subjects they teach. The most successful have an infectious enthusiasm. The good and better lessons catch and hold the pupils' interest. As a result, pupils work hard and make at

least good progress in lessons. However, in writing, teachers do not provide enough opportunities for higher attaining pupils to write extended pieces of work. This slows the progress they make. A good policy for homework that is implemented effectively and understood by pupils and parents enhances pupils' learning.

15. Pupils with special educational needs are taught well in their class lessons. Pupils with statements benefit some of the time from additional specialist adult support which enables them to participate in learning alongside their classmates. When this support is unavailable, then their progress slows. Teachers do not make sufficient use of individual education plans to inform their planning. Support staff make better use of individual education plans when they withdraw individuals and small groups for additional help with developing literacy and numeracy skills.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 55 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1 (2%)	10 (18%)	35 (64%)	8 (16%)	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.

The curriculum

The school provides a **good** curriculum. There is a **very good** range of additional activities that enrich pupils' learning. The accommodation is **satisfactory** and resources are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a good practically-based range of learning experiences.
- Pupils with special educational needs do not have equal access to the whole curriculum.
- Insufficient time is allocated to the teaching of writing in English lessons.
- Pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship education is very well developed.
- Many pupils participate in the rich and wide range of out-of-school clubs.

Commentary

16. There has been good improvement in the curriculum for pupils from Years 1 to 6 since the previous inspection. There has been excellent improvement in the ICT curriculum and it is now very good. It now meets national requirements so statutory requirements are met in all subjects. The curriculum places a good emphasis on developing basic skills and a practical approach to learning ensures that pupils find the work interesting and relevant. In the Foundation Stage, very good use is made of the very good outdoor area and resources to extend children's learning. Therefore, most pupils achieve well throughout the school. The school allocates a lot of curriculum time to the teaching of English, including additional lessons in reading, but no additional time is allocated for writing outside the literacy hour. This is a contributory factor to the better standards found in reading compared with writing. Pupils are very well prepared for the next stage in their education. The school is beginning to develop links between subjects so that pupils gain a deeper understanding of the various aspects of their learning.

17. Provision in the Foundation Stage for children with special educational needs is good. This is because they are given good support so they can readily access the same learning opportunities as their classmates. In the rest of the school special educational needs provision is satisfactory. However, pupils on the special educational needs register frequently miss parts of lessons in many subjects because they are being given additional help with their literacy and numeracy skills. The way in which this help is organised is unsatisfactory as it causes too much disruption to learning in normal classes.
18. There is very good provision for pupils' personal development. Therefore, pupils' behaviour and attitudes are very good and underpin their good learning. The very well organised school council and playground buddy programme raise pupils' awareness of their rights and responsibilities as members of the school and prepare them for citizenship. Pupils organise events to raise money for several charities. There are lessons in personal, social and health education and sex and relationships education is provided in Year 6. Drugs awareness and healthy lifestyles are promoted suitably through science. The school develops pupils' awareness of environmental issues very well, for example in its use of photo voltaic to generate electricity. The school has gained the silver award in the *Eco Schools Project* and is working towards the green flag award.
19. The very broad range of additional learning opportunities contributes very well to pupils' good achievement. There is a very good response from pupils to the good variety of out-of-school clubs. The provision for sporting activities is impressive and includes football, hockey, tennis, rugby and swimming. There are also clubs for ICT and French, and a variety of music clubs, including a choir. A very good range of visits and visitors extends the curriculum very well and these also provide important links with the community. The visits include museums, places of historical interest, a zoo and an art gallery, and the visitors include a potter and theatre productions. The school's very good links with the high school are promoted through an annual residential retreat for pupils in Years 6 and 7.
20. There are sufficient teaching and support staff to support the curriculum, who contribute well to pupils' learning and their good achievement. The ICT technician makes a very significant contribution to pupils' learning. Overall, good equipment and resources help to ensure that lessons proceed at a good pace and for pupils to enjoy learning, which is a good improvement since the previous inspection. The libraries are underused to research information and this means that older pupils' skills in using a library classification system are not developed.
21. The school's accommodation is satisfactory. There is very good accommodation for the Foundation Stage. Throughout the school, outdoor areas are spacious, attractively presented and very well equipped to form an interesting and stimulating learning environment. Fencing, windows and external doors have been replaced and are in very good condition. Some classrooms are spacious but others are cramped and the hall is too small for whole school assemblies. A Year 2 classroom, which is situated away from the main building, is in very poor condition. The school has plans to replace the classroom later this year.

Care, guidance and support

Provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is **good**. The school listens to pupils' views and acts upon them. Parents are pleased that their children receive **good** support and advice while in the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good procedures to monitor pupils' welfare and safety.
- Children have very good relationships with adults in the school.
- Induction procedures for new pupils joining the school are good.

Commentary

22. The school has good arrangements for health and safety. The governing body is actively involved in monitoring welfare in the school through regular site visits. Members of staff deal with day-to-day safety problems effectively. There are sufficient numbers of qualified adults to deal with first aid matters. The school complies with the local authority guidelines on health and safety matters and undertakes risk assessments regularly.
23. The headteacher is trained in child protection procedures. All staff understand their responsibilities for confidentiality in dealing with child protection matters. The school is aware of the need for training another senior staff member in child protection matters in case of the absence of the headteacher. Pupils are encouraged to take an active part in the school council. This enables them to get their views considered. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well.
24. Parents are happy that their children form caring relationships with adults at an early stage. Therefore, they enjoy coming to school. All adults in school know and respect pupils and respond to their personal and academic needs very well. Pupils' progress is monitored regularly and they receive good guidance on how to improve further.
25. Induction procedures are very good. Breakfast and after-school clubs provide valuable support for working families. Parents are pleased with the arrangements for settling children in the school. Pre-school visits are arranged for new parents and their children to meet with teachers. The school monitors attendance and punctuality very well.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are very pleased with the school.
- A number of parents involve themselves in the life of the school and support the school well.
- Information to parents is of good quality.
- The school works closely with other schools and the community.

Commentary

26. Parents are happy about all areas of the school's work. They are particularly pleased with the inclusiveness of the school where all pupils are encouraged to mature and become confident

in approaching adults in times of need. The inspection findings support these views. Parents have no concerns about bullying and they feel that their children are well cared for in the school.

27. Parents take a keen interest in their children's education. They help in classrooms and most help their children with homework. There is a well-organised parents' and teachers' association that organises functions to raise substantial funds for school resources.
28. Parents are pleased with the quality of pupils' annual progress reports, which are detailed and informative. They include information about progress in all subjects. Targets indicate the main focus for improvement. Three consultation evenings are held every year to discuss children's progress. There are regular newsletters and parents are welcome to speak to the headteacher, who is available both before and after school times. Information about what the pupils will learn is sent out each term. This enables parents to make arrangements to support their children with homework. The school seeks parents' views and acts upon any suggestions. These arrangements are effective in determining the views of parents.
29. The school makes very good use of local community resources to enrich pupils' learning. Pupils visit Liverpool Maritime Museum and take part in role-play to understand the anticipation of those who emigrated to Australia and America. Visits to historical buildings such as Little Moreton Hall enhance pupils' learning.
30. A number of external agencies visit the school regularly. These make pupils aware of the wider community in which they live. Very good links with local schools provide pupils with further opportunities to work and play sports with their peers from other schools. The school makes very good use of the arrangement to help gifted and talented pupils extend their learning by receiving help from specialist visitors from other schools. Year 6 pupils benefit from attending residential courses and working with Year 7 pupils from the local secondary school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are **good**. The leadership of the headteacher and the effectiveness of the school's management are **good**. The leadership of other senior staff is **good**. The governing body makes a **good** contribution to leading and managing the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher is successful in promoting a very caring ethos and engendering a commitment to raising standards.
- The senior management team is enthusiastic, committed and well focused on school improvement.
- The governing body gives good support to school leadership and management.
- The use made of the budget delegated to the school for pupils with special educational needs is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

31. The headteacher leads and manages the school well. His overriding dedication to providing pupils with a very caring ethos in which to learn is tangible and is effectively matched by a sincere commitment to maintaining high standards. The headteacher has been committed to cultivating a climate of teamwork so that staff share the same

ideals and work hard to provide the best for pupils. This corporate approach is clearly reflected in the consistent standard of provision for pupils' personal development, the good quality of teaching and the team approach to leadership and management. A good example of the latter is the involvement of the deputy headteacher in all the major aspects of leadership and management, thereby allowing her to be a key player in the school's development and provide effective support for the headteacher. The leaders successfully run an inclusive school in which all pupils are valued.

32. The headteacher and senior management team have an informed view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. This has been gained through very precise self-evaluation, which has identified ongoing priorities for development. However, the school development plan, whilst showing clearly what needs to be done, does not set precise goals or targets by which the success, or otherwise, will be measured. Nevertheless, all staff with responsibilities for leading aspects of the school's work do so with commitment and dedication. Subject co-ordinators are conscious of the school's high expectations and work hard to ensure good professional development is provided for teachers and support staff. Still, as at the time of the last inspection, they have too little time to undertake their responsibilities, particularly with regard to monitoring teaching and learning. The special educational needs co-ordinator occupies a pivotal management position within the school. She undertakes her responsibilities diligently and, as a result, the leadership and management of this aspect of the school are satisfactory. She is particularly well supported by the keen and knowledgeable governor with responsibility for overseeing special educational needs.
33. The governing body is well informed and able to identify the strengths of the school as well as the areas for development. The governing body regularly reviews and monitors provision and standards to ensure it is kept up to date with what is happening in school. Governors have very good working relationships with the school, which culminate in frankness and mutual respect. They have a clear understanding of the achievements of the school, including the improvements since the previous inspection. Decisions about the future are based on objective and first hand knowledge. Arrangements for performance management are good. There are good procedures for supporting newly qualified teachers and other staff new to the school. The school contributes well to initial teacher training. The headteacher and governors manage the staffing of the school very well, such as the recruitment of new staff, and staff enjoy their work. The school reacts well to national initiatives such as workforce remodelling.
34. Financial planning by the headteacher and governing body is good. The school works hard to ensure that finances are used to best effect for the benefit of the pupils and that value for money is achieved in spending decisions. However, an exception to this is the use made of the delegated budget the school receives to meet the requirements of pupils with special educational needs. The school has insufficient criteria in place to allocate the money available equitably or to evaluate whether the money provided is adequate to meet the pupils' needs. One consequence of this is that pupils who have a statement of special educational needs are not provided with adequate staff time to meet the provision specified in their statements.
35. Overall, this is an effective school which provides good value for money. The reasons for this are that, in spite of a low income per pupil, pupils receive a good quality education, they are well taught and achieve well within a very positive learning environment. Pupils and their parents are very pleased with the quality of education they receive and good improvements have been brought about since the previous inspection.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	1,084,850
Total expenditure	1,027,357
Expenditure per pupil	2,378

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	-165
Balance carried forward to the next	57,328

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

36. The school's provision for children in reception and nursery classes is **good**. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection, particularly in the organisation of the learning environment indoors and out. Accommodation and resources are now very good. Issues about security fencing are fully resolved. Teachers plan together to provide a coherent and continuous curriculum across the whole of the Foundation Stage. As a result, children achieve well. Overall, they are on course at least to reach the early learning goals¹ in all areas of learning before they leave the reception classes. The school is about to appoint a new curriculum leader. In the meantime the teaching staff are managing the provision well.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good relationships are fostered in a secure yet stimulating environment.
- Staff have high expectations of children's behaviour.
- Sensitive teaching enables children to respect their own heritage and appreciate the rich diversity of other cultures.

Commentary

37. Teaching is very good and children achieve very well. They are on target to exceed the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. Staff use praise and encouragement effectively to raise children's self-esteem. They listen with interest to children and show respect for their ideas. Children's work is valued and attractively displayed. As a result, children take pride in themselves and develop positive attitudes to learning. They are increasingly confident to join in class discussion or to explore new situations. The good balance between opportunities for children to choose activities for themselves and more adult-directed tasks promotes independent learning successfully. Consequently, children persevere and concentrate for increasingly long time spans. Staff have high expectations of children's behaviour. Simple rules and daily routines are consistently established so that children know what is expected of them. They respond very positively to the school's values and get on well with each other. Through well-organised games, indoors and out, and harmonious snack times, teachers promote co-operative attitudes so that older children wait their turn and share fairly. Close links with the church give even the youngest children a strong sense of belonging. Through carefully planned role-play activities and visits to the church, children have become aware of the significance of baptism. A well organised visit to Chinatown and enthusiastic celebration of festivals like Diwali successfully promote children's respect for cultures other than their own.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

¹ These goals are based on the areas of learning during the Foundation Stage. They also prepare children for when they enter compulsory education at the age of five. The goals mainly refer to literacy and numeracy skills and personal, social and emotional development. Most children should reach the early learning goals by the time they are five.

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children learn well because they constantly build securely on what they already know.
- Early reading skills are taught well.
- Good use is made of imaginative role-play to promote speaking and listening and early writing skills.
- Group work does not always reinforce teaching points effectively.

Commentary

38. Teaching is good and children achieve well. They are on target to reach the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. This is because teachers use their good knowledge and understanding of children's needs to plan work efficiently. Careful assessments based on observations of children's learning are used to plan work at suitable levels for children of differing attainment. The teaching of letters and their sounds in short, sharp daily sessions works particularly well. Consequently, most reception children recognise letters of the alphabet by shape and sound. They confidently build up simple three letter words accurately and recognise a good number of words in the first reading books. In their own writing, they make good attempts to spell words correctly. Teachers encourage children to extend their speaking and listening skills across all areas of the curriculum as well as through stories and discussions in literacy sessions. Intervention by adults in the various role-play areas extends learning well. Older children speak in sentences with increasing vocabulary. They are not good at listening to each other but listen with understanding to stories. Whilst some small group activities are effective in consolidating the main teaching points of the lesson, there are occasions when, without direct adult supervision, nursery children do not focus sufficiently on the planned tasks and learning slows.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers plan a wide range of well-focused practical activities which support learning well.
- The *Counting House* is well equipped and organised to provide a stimulating learning environment.
- Sometimes children lose interest when large group sessions go on too long.

Commentary

39. Teaching is good. Children achieve well and are on target to reach the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. Teachers provide good challenges for children through a range of interesting first-hand experiences which involve children working practically in activities to do with number. Good use is made of tabletop and outdoor games to extend children's understanding. Reception children count to twenty confidently. They name numerals to ten accurately and begin to understand the addition of doubles as counting on. Through cutting, sticking and painting with a range of materials and colours, they have formed good understanding of alternating

patterns and learnt to name triangles, squares and circles correctly. The classroom, organised as the *Counting House* provides a number-rich environment with a wealth of displays used to help children learn sorting and matching activities, number lines and shopping opportunities. These engage children actively and informally in learning. Occasionally the pace of learning slows when large-group activities go on too long. Some children lose concentration and do not listen as effectively as they might.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school grounds are developed very well as a learning resource.
- Adults' questioning skills are not always sharp enough.
- Information and communication technology is used effectively to support learning.

Commentary

40. Teaching is good and children achieve well. They are on course to reach the early learning goals by the time they leave the reception classes. Through well thought out gardening activities, children have come to appreciate the wonders of nature. They closely observe their seedlings and know they need regular watering to make them grow. Reception children identify roots, stems, leaves and flowers by observing their own specimen. They are energetic in searching for snails and careful in their observations of the way they move. These exciting, practical tasks are planned so it is clear what children are to learn. However, sometimes the adults' questions are not sufficiently focused and learning becomes blurred. Reception children are becoming independent in using information and communication technology. They are adept at using the mouse to move objects on the computer screen and, with help, control a programmable toy to move forwards and backwards on a track.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very good range of resources is well organised to extend learning effectively.
- Teaching assistants provide good support.
- Management of children on the car track is not always effective.

Commentary

41. Teaching is good and children achieve well. Children are on target to reach the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. The outdoor play facilities are particularly good and are well organised to provide suitable challenge for younger and older children. Teaching assistants are effectively deployed and have purposeful relationships with children. They provide reassurance for those less confident, but also extend play for others in line with the overall lesson plan. Reception children travel confidently around, under and through large climbing apparatus. They co-operate with a partner when kicking a football or riding on the see-saw. Rules for using the road track are not always made clear enough. Consequently, whilst most children display

good control in steering large wheeled toys around the track, they are not always sufficiently aware of the needs of others in sharing space. Clear instructions and demonstrations are given in the use of tools such as scissors and paste spreaders so that most reception children have good control when cutting and sticking.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A variety of good quality resources are accessible so that children can make choices.
- Imaginative role-play is developed well.
- The whole class sessions at the end of lessons very much help to develop children's confidence.

Commentary

42. Teaching is good and children achieve well. Children are on target to reach the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. Teachers prepare a wide range of interesting materials for children to use. With help, nursery children select carefully and confidently to make their own collage. All children explore colour when mixing paint and reception children mix shades thoughtfully to meet their own purpose. Several well-equipped and attractive role-play areas stimulate children's imagination successfully. For instance, reception children co-operate with others to act out parts of the *Jack and the Beanstalk* story in the *Giant's Castle*. Sessions at the end of lessons successfully celebrate children's achievement. Children are encouraged to show and explain their work and, in return, receive praise from the group, which raises their self-esteem and spurs them to greater effort.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good achievement in speaking and listening and in reading.
- Some higher attaining pupils underachieve in writing.
- Marking does not consistently help pupils to improve their writing in Years 3 to 6.
- Insufficient time is allocated to the teaching of writing in English lessons.
- The subject co-ordinators provide good role models for colleagues.
- The monitoring of pupils' work is not effective.

Commentary

43. Standards are below average in Year 2 and above average in Year 6. Pupils are achieving well. The Year 2 results in national tests have fluctuated but have usually been at least average in the last four years. Results were well above average in 2004 but on the whole the Year 2 pupils this year are less able at all levels than last year's pupils. A significant factor in the below average standards is that a third of the pupils have special educational needs and this is well above the school's and the national average. The test results for Year 6 pupils have been consistently above average in

the last four years. The standards follow a broadly similar pattern when the results are compared with similar schools to Saint Stephen's.

44. Standards in Year 6 are usually at least above average in reading, but are below average in writing. This is because in writing too few pupils attain a level above that expected nationally. Careful analysis of test data has resulted in the school prioritising sentence construction and punctuation as areas for development. Across the school, pupils have been given targets each term that focus on these areas. Action taken is proving to be effective and is reflected in the good improvement in these elements of writing. There is no significant difference in the standards achieved by boys and girls. The very few minority ethnic pupils achieve at the same rate as their classmates. The traveller pupils who joined the school in the last few weeks are fully included in the lessons.
45. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because staff give the pupils good extra support in lessons. The pupils mainly make good progress when they are withdrawn from the classroom for extra help with their learning. This is because the work is modified to meet the pupils' individual learning needs. However, the work that is planned for them does not always ensure that they cover similar work to their classmates; for example, some pupils have extra help with reading whilst their classmates are writing. This limits these pupils' progress in writing.
46. Standards are average in speaking and listening by Year 2 and above average by Year 6. This is because teachers plan effectively for pupils to talk about their work and discuss their thinking in English and in other subjects. Staff provide good examples to pupils through effective questioning skills that prompt pupils to think and voice their opinions and answers clearly. Pupils' very good attitudes result in them being courteous and they listen carefully to their classmates and to their teachers. This has a significant impact on their overall attainment.
47. Pupils make good progress in reading because the school allocates a lot of time to reading and basic skills are taught well. There is effective teaching of reading in the literacy hour and additional whole class lessons are also provided. Lower attaining pupils and special educational needs pupils receive extra help in reading. As a result, by the end of Year 2 standards are average. Year 2 pupils of all abilities read a range of fiction books with confidence, increasing accuracy and enjoyment. Many Year 6 pupils read with good expression and with understanding. There are formal assessments of reading twice a year and teachers have their own systems for recording pupils' progress in lessons. Adult volunteers from the community help pupils with their reading in school and parents give good support to pupils with their reading at home. Older pupils do not use the library enough to research information and this means that their skills in using the library classification system are not developed.
48. Standards are below average in writing by Years 2 and 6. Most pupils achieve well by Year 2. This is because of teachers' high expectations coupled with marking that praises pupils' efforts and achievements. Additionally in Year 2, the effective marking shows pupils how to improve. Therefore, many Year 2 pupils write confidently and many punctuate sentences accurately. Achievement is mainly satisfactory by Year 6 but it is improving, particularly in Years 3 to 5, because of the school's focus on writing. The initiative is too recent to have sufficient impact in Year 6 so booster classes are used to help to raise standards in this year group. As a result, the proportion of Year 6 pupils reaching a level higher than the nationally expected one has increased by 5 per cent this year. Most Year 6 pupils structure the writing clearly and choose words carefully to create a particular effect. Year 6 pupils present their

work neatly but standards are below average in handwriting because teachers do not always insist that pupils join their handwriting. Teachers make use of ICT to develop pupils' literacy skills.

49. There is good teaching and learning in English, which shows good improvement in Years 1 to 2 since the previous inspection. The strong features of these lessons are well-organised activities and resources that engage pupils' interest and enthusiasm. This means that pupils work purposefully and the rate of learning is mainly good. However, the written tasks that teachers set for higher attaining pupils do not ensure that they write extended pieces of work and on these occasions they underachieve. All teachers provide good verbal feedback in lessons but in Years 3 to 6 most teachers rarely use written comments to show pupils how to improve. This restricts pupils' understanding of what they need to do next to improve. The school does not allocate additional time for writing outside the literacy hour. This means that pupils rarely write at length in English lessons and that higher attainers do not achieve as well as they should.
50. The subject co-ordinators provide good leadership. They provide good role models for other staff in their teaching and are committed to improving standards. Management is satisfactory. Clear and accurate areas have been identified to raise standards in the subject but the criteria for evaluating the success of the developments are not sufficiently precise. The co-ordinators support colleagues well but the monitoring of pupils' work is a recent development. Therefore, they do not have a clear overall view of the provision in the subject. Improvement has been satisfactory since the time of the previous inspection.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

51. Pupils apply their skills well. However, this good practice is not consistent across all subjects and year groups. Pupils use their good competency in reading to research information. There are satisfactory opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills. These skills are used effectively in some year groups, for example in design and technology in Year 6, history in Year 2 and science in Year 5.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve at least well by the time they leave the school, with higher attaining pupils achieving very well.
- Teachers use a range of very good teaching methods.
- The subject co-ordinator provides very good leadership and management.
- Pupils use their good numeracy skills effectively in other subjects.

Commentary

52. By the end of Year 6, standards of attainment in national tests in each of the last four years have been at least above average. The trend in results over that time is above the national trend. Inspection evidence indicates that standards by the end of Year 6 are currently above average. Lower and average attaining pupils achieve well and higher attaining pupils achieve very well. Inspection evidence indicates that standards

attained by the end of Year 2 are average. This is significantly lower than the 2004 national test result of well above average. This is because the current Year 2 has a much higher proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs compared with the 2004 group. Thirty-three per cent of pupils have special educational needs, whereas last year's group of pupils had less than 5 per cent. Throughout the school, there is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls.

53. Teaching and learning are very good. Teachers plan their mathematics lessons effectively. They assess pupils' work thoroughly and use the assessment information well to plan work for pupils' varying needs. This ensures that pupils do work that is at the right level of difficulty to build on their previous learning. Teachers usually mark work to a high standard. The marking helps pupils to improve their work as well as giving the teachers detailed information about what pupils know, can do and understand. This forms the basis of their planning for subsequent lessons and further ensures that pupils' learning builds successfully on what they can already do. However, there are a few examples of teachers not providing helpful comments about how pupils could improve their work. Homework provision is very good.
54. Teachers use a range of very good teaching methods. These include whole-class teaching, group and individual work, involving practical, investigative and problem-solving activities. Teachers have very secure subject knowledge and so pupils who are capable of attaining highly are given hard enough work. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour very effectively because they have very good relationships with the pupils and make very good use of agreed school procedures for dealing with pupils who show signs of misbehaviour. Mental calculation work is of good quality. Pupils use their well-developed mental skills to work out problems quickly and accurately.
55. The subject is very well led and managed by the subject co-ordinator. She has very considerable subject expertise and is a very good role model for staff and pupils. There is a very clear picture of what needs to be done to maintain the high standards of achievement. She monitors teaching and learning very effectively and evaluates the outcomes accurately. Therefore, support is directed to where it is most needed. She carefully analyses information about pupils' work to identify its strengths and weaknesses. This means that teachers concentrate their planning on those areas that need improving.

Mathematics across the curriculum

56. Pupils have sufficient mathematical skills to enable them to make good progress in other subjects. Teachers provide a good range of opportunities for pupils to practise and develop these skills in other subjects. Teachers make good use of ICT to help pupils learn in mathematics.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well by the time they leave the school in Year 6.
- There is a significant amount of good teaching.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good.

- The monitoring role of the co-ordinator is underdeveloped.

Commentary

57. Inspection findings indicate that pupils reach standards that are above average by the end of Year 6. Standards by the end of Year 2 are average. However, this is not a typical picture as standards are usually higher. The reason there is a discrepancy in the current Year 2 is because a very high proportion of pupils have special educational needs. Over 30 per cent of pupils are on the special educational needs register, which is twice the whole school average of just under 15 per cent. When compared with schools nationally and those similar to Saint Stephen's, standards have been usually high.
58. Throughout the school, pupils make good progress. There is no significant difference in the achievement of boys and girls. When pupils with special educational needs are taught alongside their classmates they make similar progress. However, when these pupils miss parts of lessons because they are withdrawn for additional literacy and numeracy help they do not make sufficient progress and do not achieve as well as they could in relation to their prior attainment. At times, when pupils who have a statement of special educational need receive too little specialist support, they cannot make the progress of which they are capable. During lessons where they receive good levels of support they make good progress.
59. Teaching is good. Pupils are introduced to new knowledge and factual information well, but the development of subject vocabulary is taught with less consistency. Teachers have very high expectations about standards of pupils' behaviour and pupils respond to these by showing very good attitudes to learning. This has a significant impact upon their rate of progress. Lesson time is used very well, the pace of learning is lively and pupils produce a lot of work. Teachers make lessons interesting because they make good use of investigative and practical activities. Pupils know why a test is fair and how to construct their own investigations which will produce fair results. The curriculum is planned effectively to provide appropriate learning in all aspects of the subject. Teachers make effective use of the good range of resources at their disposal. In addition, pupils in Year 6 are well prepared for the national tests.
60. Although there is a school policy for marking, teachers do not implement it consistently. Some pupils are not provided with sufficient guidance about how to improve their work, nor do they have enough knowledge about what they have done well. Assessment procedures are satisfactory. Teachers use ICT effectively to help pupils learn in science.
61. Science is well led and satisfactorily managed. The co-ordinator provides a sense of purpose and vision which has resulted in staff being an effective team of science teachers. However, insufficient time is available for the co-ordinator to monitor the quality either of the standards of teaching or of learning in order to review trends and implement any action that may be needed to ensure high standards are maintained. However, since the time of the last inspection good progress has been made because the quality of pupils' investigative work is better and teaching is of a higher standard.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well by the time they leave the school.
- There has been very good improvement since the last inspection.
- The quality of teaching and learning is very good.
- The leadership and management are very good.
- Teachers make very good use of ICT across the curriculum.
- The school benefits greatly from a very skilled technician.

Commentary

62. Pupils' attainment in all aspects of ICT is above national expectations by the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils of all abilities make very good progress and achieve very well by the time they leave the school. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls. Standards are very significantly higher than at the time of the last inspection, when they were below national expectations. This represents very good improvement. This is due to a number of reasons. A considerable investment in time and money has included staff training and a new computer suite. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. Excellent use is made of a skilled technician who provides very valuable advice and help, including on-site technical support. She also helps support pupils' learning very effectively. The co-ordinator leads the subject very successfully and has clear plans for the subject's continued development, together with the ability, support and commitment to implement it successfully. He has very successfully built on the previous co-ordinator's reported very good leadership and management.
63. Teaching and learning are very good. Teachers build on pupils' previous learning very effectively because there are good systems for checking and recording what pupils know, can do and understand. Teachers use this information very well to plan pupils' work. Very secure subject knowledge underpins the teaching. This means that the teachers give clear instructions and the pupils know exactly what they have to do to improve their work. Teachers use correct terms for the subject. They circulate around the class to support and monitor pupils' work. They are then in a position to identify errors quickly or offer to help when pupils are hesitant. There is good, firm, yet friendly management of pupils that results in very good behaviour and no interruption in the pupils' learning. Pupils are very interested, concentrate very well and follow instructions promptly because of the very good teaching. They show very good motivation for the work they are given. This extends pupils' computing skills and builds their confidence in the subject. The use of national guidance as the basis for planning lessons ensures that requirements are met for teaching all aspects of the subject.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

64. Teachers make good use of ICT to help pupils learn in other subjects. Computers are used in English. This has resulted in pupils reaching a good standard in word-processing skills. For example, Year 6 produced good work about the story of Cinderella. In mathematics, Year 2 pupils completed good work on two-dimensional shapes. In geography, Year 5 pupils created, to a high standard, plans of their classroom. In science and mathematics, pupils use graphs, generated on the computer, to represent their findings from investigations. Year 2 pupils used an art package to produce good quality pictures of a sunset scene.

HUMANITIES

Geography

Provision in geography is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are well taught, most make good progress and achieve well.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning.
- Pupils' work is not marked well enough.
- The co-ordinator does not have adequate opportunity to monitor standards, teaching or learning.

Commentary

65. Pupils' attainment in geography meets national expectations. Most pupils make good progress and achieve well. However, a minority of pupils with special educational needs miss parts of their lessons because they are being given extra help to develop their literacy and numeracy skills. The way in which this extra help is scheduled is unsatisfactory because it deprives pupils of the opportunity to learn alongside their classmates.
66. A significant feature of the three lessons observed during the inspection was the very positive attitudes pupils showed towards learning. Their behaviour also was very good. When asked questions pupils are very responsive, they take turns sensibly and listen to the views and opinions of others earnestly. Teachers and other adults who help in lessons provide good role models for the pupils and cultivate a climate of mutual respect.
67. The good standards of teaching observed are also evidenced by the work pupils have recorded in their books. All the evidence shows that teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subject. They provide pupils with encouragement to work hard. Their expectations of what pupils can achieve are high, work is challenging and learning is brought to life through making use of trips and visits. This was evident in follow-up work pupils in Year 3 were undertaking after a recent walk around the local area. The pupils used various maps to trace the route they followed, devised various symbols to represent landmarks and correctly described, using geographical vocabulary, other routes such as from their own house to a friend's.
68. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. Since the time of the previous inspection satisfactory progress has been made and standards have been maintained. However, the role of the co-ordinator remains an area for improvement. Insufficient opportunities are available for pupils' work and the quality of teaching and learning to be monitored.

History

69. No judgement can be made on the provision in history because no lessons were seen. Pupils' work in books and on display and teachers' planning indicate that the curriculum is satisfactory. Standards meet national expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Year 2 pupils develop an understanding of significant past events such as

the Great Fire of London and the legacy of famous people, including Florence Nightingale. In the junior classes pupils study a range of aspects pertinent to British, European and world history. Pupils readily discuss with inspectors their knowledge and understanding of the invaders and settlers, Ancient Egypt and World War II. Teachers effectively promote pupils' literacy skills and pupils use research materials well. Well planned visits and visiting speakers play an important part in making the work interesting and help pupils achieve well. The subject also makes a good contribution to pupils' wider personal development.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Music

70. Insufficient teaching was seen to form a secure judgement on overall provision. Nevertheless, inspection evidence from discussions and observations indicates that there has been considerable improvement since the previous inspection. The curriculum co-ordinator provides good leadership and has implemented a commercial scheme of work which supports all teachers in their planning for continuity in the development of skills across the school. She has worked alongside colleagues and organised significant training to raise staff confidence. Her monitoring of pupils' work indicates that standards are rising.
71. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 were observed in whole school hymn practice. Pupils sing clearly with careful diction and awareness of rhythm. Standards of singing observed in Year 6 are in line with national expectations. Pupils practised with a backing track in preparation for a performance to be given to the whole school. They maintained their own part whilst performing with an awareness of how different parts fit together. They were thoughtful in suggesting improvements.
72. The curriculum is enhanced for a few pupils by opportunities to learn the guitar or join the recorder clubs.

Art and design and design and technology

73. Three lessons were seen in art and design in Years 3 to 6 and no lessons were seen in design and technology. Therefore, no judgement on provision is made in these subjects. Work in both subjects was sampled through examining displays around the school and books containing samples of pupils' work, and discussions with teachers and pupils. Pupils' learning is enhanced by the way that some teachers link the work to other subjects, such as science, geography and history, and through visits and visitors to the school.
74. Standards in art and design are average by Years 2 and 6. Teachers display good examples of pupils' work around the school. This inspires pupils and staff and successfully promotes pupils' skills in art and their cultural development. The standard is above average for many of these creations, for example in collage, textiles and painting. The clay pots that Year 2 pupils produced when they worked with a potter are of a high standard. Art and design has been a focus for staff development this year and this has been successful in improving teachers' confidence and skills, and the quality of the curriculum, which is now good. Pupils say that teachers make the work interesting and enjoyable. Therefore, pupils are keen to learn and they achieve well. This was evident in the good lessons seen in Years 3 to 6. These were well planned and organised, and resources were well chosen to make the work interesting.

Basic techniques such as sewing, pattern work and painting are taught well. Leadership of the subject is good. The co-ordinator teaches the older pupils and this is proving effective in the raising of standards.

75. There was insufficient evidence to judge standards in design and technology in Year 2 but the evidence indicates that a satisfactory curriculum is in place. Standards are above average by Year 6. There is a good curriculum in Years 3 to 6 and teachers have good expertise in the subject. Therefore, pupils' skills are developed systematically and pupils achieve well. They produce good designs, evaluate and modify the products they make. Teachers structure the work carefully and provide a good range of interesting resources for pupils to use. This was evident when Year 6 pupils studied a range of sunhats, disassembled them and made a mock sunhat in cheaper material before designing and making their own. The finished products are very individual and are well made. Leadership of the subject is good. The co-ordinator has considerable impact on teachers' expertise, the curriculum and the standards that pupils achieve in Years 3 to 6.

Physical education

76. No lessons were observed. Teachers' planning indicates that pupils cover all the required areas of work in physical education, including swimming. Pupils enjoy the subject and benefit from a very good range of extra-curricular activities.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

77. Only two lessons were seen during the inspection and so it is not possible to make an overall judgement on teaching and learning. Nevertheless, inspection evidence from display and discussion indicates that the provision in personal, social and health education and citizenship is very good. Personal development is at the heart of the curriculum and is closely bound up with the school's religious foundation. Very close links with the church and parish promote a strong sense of community. Guidance is provided for the teaching of personal, social and health education in all year groups so that personal skills are developed carefully over time. Personal, social and health education is generally closely linked to the religious education curriculum and appropriately taught in religious education lessons. Outside agencies, like the school nurse and representatives of the emergency services, make valuable contributions in providing sex education and raising pupils' awareness of drugs and alcohol abuse as well as promoting positive attitudes towards the local community. Healthy lifestyles, including diet, are promoted through the science curriculum. The school has recently joined the Healthy Schools Project. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve very well and are in line to exceed expected standards by the end of the reception year.
78. The school lives up to its mission statement to prepare today's community for tomorrow's world and 'develop a sense of stewardship towards the world'. Particular emphasis is given to promoting the sense of belonging to the school community and the fostering of supportive relationships is central to all teaching and learning. A sense of responsibility for the environment is clearly reflected in the school's involvement with the Eco initiative, for which it has received a silver award for working towards a sustainable lifestyle. The everyday application of this in managing litter, recycling paper, planting trees and flowers illustrates the school's commitment very well. Opportunities to engage in the democratic process involve all pupils from Years 2 to 6 voting for their own representatives on the school council. The council has carried

forward several initiatives and has influenced the life of the school, for instance by improving playground facilities.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	4
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3

Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)	2
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2

The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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