

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ST MARGARET MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Carlisle

LEA area: Cumbria

Unique reference number: 112371

Headteacher: Mr G Smith

Lead inspector: Mr D Byrne

Dates of inspection: 4<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> May 2004

Inspection number: 257782

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:	212
School address:	Kirklands Road Carlisle Cumbria
Postcode:	CA2 4 JD
Telephone number:	01228 607540
Fax number:	01228 607541
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr S McManamon
Date of previous inspection:	6 <sup>th</sup> June 1998

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

This is a voluntary aided Catholic primary school of average size, situated in a suburb of Carlisle, Cumbria. It educates 212 boys and girls aged three to 11. The attainment on entry is below average overall. The school serves an area of relatively high levels of social and economic deprivation and many children live in disadvantaged homes. Over a fifth of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is above the national average. An above average percentage of pupils have special educational needs with an above average percentage of pupils with Statements of Educational Need. A well below average percentage of pupils is from an ethnic minority. No pupil requires support for English as an additional language. There are no refugees or pupils from traveller backgrounds. The movement of pupils into and out of the school at times other than the normal times of arrival or departure is below the national average. The school gained an Achievement Award in 2002 and the Investors in People Award in 2000 and again in 2004. The school makes community provision for drop-in sessions for school nurses.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
28076	Mr D Byrne	Lead inspector	Science, information and communication technology, design and technology, physical education, special educational needs.
9981	Mr S Hussain	Lay inspector	
29504	Mrs S Herring	Team Inspector	Foundation Stage curriculum, mathematics, art and design, music.
31807	Mr D Carpenter	Team inspector	English, geography, history, personal, social and health education and citizenship.

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **OVERALL EVALUATION**

This is a **good** school that gives good value for money. Good teaching in the Foundation Stage and at times very good teaching in Years 4, 5 and 6 result in pupils achieving well overall after starting school with below average levels of attainment. Very good provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development contributes to pupils developing very good attitudes and behaviour and good levels of personal development. The school is well governed and managed and the headteacher provides very strong leadership.

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

- Children in the Foundation Stage get a good start to their education.
- In Years 1 to 6, achievement is good overall, particularly in science and geography, but higher-attaining pupils in Year 2 could do better in mathematics and scientific enquiry.
- The family ethos of the school and good teaching overall results in the very good behaviour of pupils and in their willingness to learn and work hard.
- Each pupil is valued as an individual and this, coupled with high levels of care and support for pupils' personal and social development, builds pupils' confidence.
- The good quality of the curriculum provides well for pupils with special educational needs and enriches learning for all pupils through a good variety of activities.
- The management and leadership ensure that the school steadily improves, but procedures for involving co-ordinators in some elements of subject management are too ad hoc.
- The self-evaluation system accurately identifies how well the school is doing.
- Some key areas of the accommodation are unsatisfactory and adversely affect the performance of some pupils and staff.
- Very good links with parents and the community contribute to the quality of education.

The school has made good progress since the last inspection. Significant improvements have been made in the quality of provision for children in the Foundation Stage. Standards have risen overall since the last inspection, although there has been a very recent dip at the end of Year 2, particularly in mathematics. Standards in science have risen considerably and in design and technology pupils do as well as expected for their age. Across the school, the provision for pupils with special educational needs is better and the curriculum has been improved. An effective system for assessing pupils' attainment has been developed and is used as part of an effective school self-evaluation system. The school has removed its deficit and developed secure policies for getting the best value for money.

## STANDARDS ACHIEVED

### Year 6 Results

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

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.

Overall, pupils achieve **well** after starting school with attainment that is below average. Children in the Foundation Stage and in Years 3 to 6 achieve well and reach the standards expected for their age in each area of their learning. In Years 1 and 2, pupils achieve satisfactorily overall. Inspection evidence indicates that standards at the end of Year 6 are in line with the national average in English and mathematics and above the national average in science. These judgements confirm the standards shown in the table above. In science, however, standards in the current class in Year 6 are not quite as high as last year but are still above average. Over the last five years, standards in Year 6 have held steady in English and mathematics at around the national average. Standards in science at the end of Year 6 have been consistently above the national average over recent years. Standards in Year 2 had held up well until two years ago when they dipped in reading and mathematics. Standards are rising again in reading but more needs to be done in mathematics. In Year 2, current standards in reading and writing are average, but despite recent improvement standards are well below average in mathematics.

Between Year 2 and Year 6, pupils in 2003 made satisfactory progress in English and mathematics based upon the results this Year 6 group gained in Year 2. Very good progress occurred in science over the same time. Across the school, pupils with special educational needs achieve as well as other pupils. Higher-attaining pupils do well in the Foundation Stage and in Years 3 to 6, but in Year 2, they could do better overall.

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

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **very good**. This contributes to very good attitudes, behaviour and the development of good relationships. Despite the school's best efforts, unauthorised attendance still exceeds the national average, but punctuality is good.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION

Overall, the school provides a **good** quality of education with some significant strengths. Teaching and learning are **good** overall. They are particularly good in the Foundation Stage and in Years 4, 5 and 6. There are some shortcomings in teaching in Year 2 related primarily to challenging higher-attaining pupils in mathematics and in scientific enquiry. Very effective assessments are made of children when they start school in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 to 6 good assessments are made of pupils' attainment and progress. All

assessment information is used effectively to improve the quality of teaching. Good teamwork between teachers and support staff makes sure that pupils with special educational needs participate in all parts of the curriculum. There is a good curriculum that makes learning stimulating for pupils. Good use is made of educational visits to enhance lessons. The accommodation and range of learning resources are satisfactory overall, but some parts of the school need improving to reach acceptable standards. Pupils receive very good levels of care with very good attention paid to their health and safety. The school effectively canvasses pupils' opinions about the running of the school and involves pupils in evaluating their own performance. Very good partnerships exist with parents, the local community and other schools.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership and management of the school are **good** overall. Governance is good. The headteacher provides very good leadership and works effectively with the deputy headteacher to run the school smoothly. All staff have a clearly defined role in managing the school, and their roles are performed well overall. Strategies for releasing staff to manage some subjects, are however, not planned carefully enough to enable co-ordination to occur during the school day. The senior management team is narrow and does not include representation from Years 1 to 2. A very good ethos is created throughout the school with good levels of inclusion for all pupils.

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

Parents have very good levels of satisfaction with the school. They feel the school is very caring and provides a good quality of education. Pupils enjoy the school very much and they are happy with the quality of teaching and with what they are taught. They feel they are listened to and given the chance to be involved in contributing ideas about ways of improving the school.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Raise standards in mathematics and scientific enquiry in Year 2.
- Ensure that there is a consistent approach to challenging higher-attaining pupils across the school.
- Develop strategic plans for releasing subject co-ordinators.
- Continue to pursue all possible ways of improving the weaknesses in the accommodation.
- Maintain efforts to raise attendance by keeping absence to a minimum.



## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

Achievement is **good overall**. From a below average standard on entry to the school in the nursery, pupils in Year 6 reach standards that are average in English and mathematics and above average in science. In Year 2, standards are satisfactory overall. Standards are average in reading and writing but well below average in mathematics. In science, pupils in Year 2 develop a secure knowledge of scientific ideas but could do better in aspects of scientific enquiry.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in the Foundation Stage and in Years 3 to 6.
- Standards in mathematics at the end of Year 2 have declined in recent years and are not high enough.
- The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is good.

#### Commentary

##### The Foundation Stage

1. From a below average starting point, the children in the nursery and reception classes do well. By the end of their time in the reception class, they reach the standards expected for their age in each area of their learning. Pupils achieve well because of a very good curriculum that is carefully planned and taught by a strong team of teaching and support staff. Children develop an interest in learning and enjoy the things they do.

##### Key Stage 1

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	15.3 (16.0)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	14.8 (14.4)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	14.6 (16.4)	16.3 (16.5)

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

2. In Year 1, a good rate of learning continues, but in Year 2 it slows. This decrease is especially noticeable in mathematics. Inspection evidence shows that in mathematics, standards are well below the national average and confirms the accuracy of the results of the 2003 national tests. Standards in mathematics are lower than pupils in similar schools mainly because higher-attaining pupils are not challenged enough. In reading and writing, pupils in Year 2 perform satisfactorily compared to the national average. Prior to 2001, standards had been rising steadily in reading and mathematics, but over the last two years standards have declined in these subjects. This is mainly as a result of the impact of staff absence that has disrupted the continuity of teaching. Standards in reading and writing are now starting to recover, but more needs to be done in mathematics. The school is establishing a strategy to do so. Standards in science are

broadly in line with national expectations, but there is a weakness in the quality of scientific enquiry, and in this area pupils do not do as well as they could.

## Key Stage 2

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.0 (27.2)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	27.0 (26.2)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	30.0 (29.4)	28.6 (28.3)

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

3. In Years 3 to 6, the rate of learning picks up. It accelerates noticeably in Years 4, 5 and 6 as result of strong teaching that expects pupils to work as hard as they can. The good progress in Years 4, 5 and 6 results in pupils achieving well in mathematics. They steadily make up ground so that they reach the standards expected for their age. In English, pupils also make good progress and achieve well. Pupils do particularly well in improving their speaking skills as well as extending their skills of reading and writing. Pupils also achieve well in science. Standards in Year 6 are above the national average, with pupils developing a particularly good grounding in scientific ideas and use of suitable vocabulary. In 2003, the Year 6 class made satisfactory progress in English and mathematics from the standards they gained when they were in Year 2, and made very good progress in science.
4. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are average at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6. Steady investment in the subject, including staff training, has lifted the quality of provision. Standards are rising and pupils make good use of computers to support learning. Standards in geography are above average and average in all other subjects with strengths in aspects of art and design and physical education.
5. Pupils with special educational needs and lower-attaining pupils achieve as well as other pupils. The dedicated care and support of teaching assistants, coupled with the effective planning of teachers, ensures that the needs of those with special educational needs are effectively met. The needs of higher-attaining pupils are met well overall in all classes, except in Year 2, where their needs are not consistently planned for.

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

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **very good**, promoting amongst pupils **very good** attitudes, behaviour and levels of personal development. Attendance is **unsatisfactory**, but punctuality is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- A very good ethos created by the headteacher and staff contributes to the very good attitudes and levels of respect between pupils.
- The school successfully develops amongst pupils very good levels of spirituality, moral and social development.
- Innovative strategies are employed to successfully promote very good behaviour at playtimes and during lessons.

- Attendance is unsatisfactory despite the school's best efforts.

## Commentary

6. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are both very good overall because of the impact of the very good levels of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Throughout the school both teaching and support staff encourage high levels of co-operation and respect amongst pupils for others as well as good levels of independence. Effective strategies have been devised to develop the pupils' sense of responsibility towards others and their ability to use initiative when working independently. Strong leadership by the headteacher and senior staff creates a very good ethos that results in pupils conducting themselves very well. The good provision of playtime games helps pupils to direct their energies positively when they return to lessons. During lessons and playtimes, pupils behave very well and show respect to others and for those different from themselves. Rewards and sanctions are applied fairly. Cases of bullying are rare because of effective systems for monitoring such events and swift actions to remedy the situation. There have been no exclusions in the last twelve months.
7. As a result of the high levels of care and a strong family ethos, pupils' moral and social development is very good. Personal development is very good. Pupils willingly take part in extracurricular activities, and in Years 4 and 6 they benefit from well-organised residential visits. Pupils develop a strong sense of spirituality as a result of well planned and conducted school assemblies and the good range of activities that develop pupils' awareness of the sense of beauty of nature, music and art. Cultural development is good and includes studies of other faiths and cultures spread across the curriculum. In the Foundation Stage, good provision for children's personal, social and emotional development results in children achieving well and reaching the standards expected for their age. Attendance is below national average. Some parents are not as supportive as they could be in ensuring that pupils come to school and in some cases, pupils are taken on holiday during term time. The school is taking very effective action to reduce the levels of absenteeism. Initiatives involving close work with the local education authority and the introduction of the school's Breakfast club are effective in keeping absence down.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	5.3	School data:	0.8
National data:	5.4	National data:	0.4

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

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

**The quality of education is good.** Teaching and learning are **good** overall, with particular strengths in the Foundation Stage and Years 4, 5 and 6 and in the quality of support for special educational needs. A **good** range of extra-curricular activities and educational visits enhances a **good** curriculum. The school provides **very good** levels of care, support, advice and guidance. Links with parents, the community and other schools are **very good**.

## Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is **good** overall with **good** assessment procedures.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- High expectations of pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 result in pupils learning particularly well.
- Good teamwork between teaching and support staff successfully meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs.
- The quality of teaching in mathematics in Year 2 is unsatisfactory because higher-attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged.
- Effective assessment systems provide information to enable the school to evaluate how well they are teaching so that improvements can be made where necessary.

### Commentary

#### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 26 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	5	12	8	1	0	0

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

8. Throughout the school, staff skilfully manage pupils and provide a very caring and secure atmosphere in which to learn. As a result, pupils behave very well, make very good gains in confidence and usually try hard. Teaching is the strongest in the Foundation Stage and in Years 4, 5 and 6. In these classes, the needs of both lower-attaining and higher-attaining pupils are effectively provided for, but this is not consistently the case in other classes.
9. In the nursery and reception classes, strong teamwork and creative planning results in children making good progress. Imaginative and stimulating activities harness the children's interest, resulting in children developing good attitudes to learning. Children respond well to a good range of outside experiences whilst also participating in a wide variety of indoor activities designed to develop each area of their learning effectively.
10. In Years 1 and 2, teaching is satisfactory overall, but there are some weaknesses in elements of teaching in Year 2. Inspection evidences indicates that these weaknesses have appeared recently, primarily due to unavoidable absence. Nevertheless, this has had an impact on pupils' achievement. The teaching of mathematics in Year 2 is particularly weak, mainly because lessons are pitched at average- and lower-attaining pupils and the needs of higher-attaining pupils are not systematically planned for. In English, whilst teaching in Year 2 is satisfactory, too much emphasis is placed on pupils' using worksheets, which reduces opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills. The teaching of scientific knowledge is good, but expectations for developing pupils' skills of scientific enquiry are too low. This reduces standards.
11. In the other classes, the quality of teaching is satisfactory in Year 3 with some significant strengths in Years 4, 5 and 6. In these classes, meticulous planning of lessons ensures that the needs of all pupils are met. Pupils' ideas are valued and there

are high expectations for them to think for themselves. Lessons have a clear purpose that is shared with pupils, and activities are paced very well so that pupils learn at a good rate. In English, pupils successfully develop their speaking and listening skills and their skills of reading and writing are effectively used to support learning across the curriculum. In science, teachers make good use of scientific vocabulary and the teaching of scientific ideas is most effective. Good use is made of ICT to support learning. Common weaknesses in lessons that are only satisfactory are that the pace is too slow because pupils have to listen for too long before getting down to work, and the planned work for higher-attaining pupils is not as challenging as it could be.

12. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Teaching and support staff work well together in identifying and planning to meet the need of these pupils. A sensible combination of individual support and group work ensures that pupils make good progress and are included in all aspects of school life. Effective individual education plans provide good levels of detail for each pupil and are used to guide teaching staff.
13. There are effective systems for keeping an eye on the attainment and progress of pupils across the school. Very effective systems are used to identify the needs of children when they start school. In Years 1 to 6, regular assessments are made of pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science as they move through the school. The end of key stage National Curriculum test data is effectively analysed in order to find ways of improving teaching further. The school makes very effective use of all data to set targets for groups of pupils and to plot the progress of pupils over time. In Years 4, 5 and 6, good use of marking involves pupils in setting their own targets for improvement in English and mathematics, thereby developing pupils' own awareness of how well they are doing. Effective use is made of computerised records to ease the handling of recorded data.

## **The curriculum**

The curriculum is **good** with good enrichment. Accommodation and resources are **satisfactory**.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- A very good curriculum in the Foundation Stage provides children with a good start to school life.
- Whilst all subjects are taught across the school for a suitable time, in Year 2 some aspects of mathematics and science are not given enough attention.
- A good range of educational visits and extracurricular activities enrich the curriculum.
- The curriculum is tailored to make it accessible for pupils with special educational needs.
- Pupils benefit from access to a good range of sports and arts activities.
- Some parts of the accommodation need refurbishing and modernising.

## **Commentary**

14. Since the last inspection, the headteacher and his deputy have worked hard to successfully establish good quality subject planning and to create a culture of innovation in the curriculum. In the Foundation Stage, detailed and thorough planning ensures that the needs of children in both the nursery and reception classes are met effectively. A very good range of stimulating activities is provided that extend and

develop children's knowledge and skills. In Years 1 to 6, all subjects are taught for a suitable amount of time, but in Year 2 there are weaknesses in aspects of the provision for mathematics and aspects of science. These relate to expectations for pupils to participate in investigational activities. The national strategies are used securely to plan work in literacy and numeracy and are being adapted to meet the pupils' needs.

15. Good provision is made for pupils to participate in sport with particularly good links with the local high school. A good range of activities is provided for pupils to participate in a range of arts-based activities. These include participating in musical events, visiting art galleries and producing and taking part in musical productions. Good provision is made to extend pupils' learning beyond the classroom with a good range of additional activities. A wide range of day and residential educational visits successfully enriches the curriculum.
16. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and ensures that they have access to the full curriculum. The provision for higher-attaining pupils is good overall, but is unsatisfactory in mathematics in Year 2. Inspection evidence shows that the introduction of the movement programme to the curriculum benefits the attitudes and behaviour of pupils. It does this by providing pupils from Year 3 to 6 with a programme of movement that is designed to improve pupils' co-ordination and thinking skills.
17. The accommodation is satisfactory overall, but some significant weaknesses exist. The reception class is in need of refurbishment to bring it up to date. At the moment, the staff in the reception class have to work hard to make the best of old furniture and some dark learning areas to create a vibrant classroom. The state of the toilets serving Years 1 to 6 is unsuitable for the needs of pupils, in particular for girls in Years 5 and 6. The size, location and furnishings of the administrative office and that of the headteacher are relatively poor and this makes it difficult for the headteacher to have a suitably confidential area. Resources for learning are adequate overall.

### Care, guidance and support

Provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is **very good**. The school provides **very good** support, guidance and advice and has **good** procedures for seeking the views of pupils.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The staff's good knowledge of all pupils ensures that each individual gets the support and encouragement they need.
- Induction arrangements are good.
- There are very good arrangements for child protection.
- Pupils have very good, trusting relationships with adults in school.
- The school has effective systems for seeking, valuing and acting on pupils' views.

### Commentary

18. Home visits are offered to all new children to the nursery and reception class. Parents are given very good information about the school and new children are able to take part in induction sessions with their prospective class before they start school. These factors give children much confidence about starting school life. The school's designated officer for child protection is very well trained, and all teaching and support staff have received good basic training. Accident and emergency procedures, including

arrangements for first aid, are very good with very good procedures for monitoring potential risks. Visitors give talks for pupils on matters such as road and railway safety.

19. There is a very strong family ethos at this school because of its emphasis on basic values such as care, respect and trust. For instance, 'family tables' are often formed at lunch times when staff has issues to discuss with pupils. For these reasons, relationships at all levels are very good, based on trust between pupils and adults.
20. Staff know pupils well and give good advice, support and guidance to pupils. Teachers and support staff work well together to advise and support pupils in their learning. They are quick to identify pupils who are struggling in lessons and give additional support. There are good arrangements to monitor personal development. The school works very effectively with specialist support agencies. For example, the educational psychologist, school nurse and specialist teachers are employed to meet particular needs. These factors illustrate the school's good inclusive approach to learning.
21. There are good opportunities for pupils to make their views known to staff and become involved in the school. The school council is now well established and enables pupils to learn about democracy and how decisions are made. Even the children in reception class are able to attend council meetings as observers. It is pleasing to see that the school takes so many of the council's suggestions on board. For example, play equipment has increased, cloakroom monitors established and the school is giving thought to adopting a school pet.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school involves parents very well by seeking, valuing and acting on their views.
- Parents are provided with very good information about the school and its work.
- Parents make a very good contribution to their children's learning at school and at home.
- The school has established many very good links with the wider community and other schools, and these enrich learning.

### **Commentary**

22. The school has an open door policy and welcomes parents as partners in the education of their children. The school frequently consults with parents on a wide range of issues. A few parents express concerns about the quality of information about how their children are getting on, but inspection evidence shows that information for parents is very good. Parents are given much information about the curriculum and topics of study Regular newsletters keep them updated on issues and forthcoming school events. The school works very hard to increase parental involvement in their children's learning by organising helpful courses such as 'family literacy', mathematics and computer skills. The Friends of the School work very hard to raise funds that are used to improve learning resources and accommodation.
23. Links in the community include those with St Margaret Mary and Christ the King churches. Many school trips and visits in the community support learning. For instance, pupils in Years 5 and 6 have recently been to the educational department of the Environment Agency as part of their work in geography. The school puts a great deal

back into the community by fundraising for charities and good causes or engaging in other activities. Strong links with a local further education college enables many parents to take advantage of computer skills courses on offer at school. The school's very good educational links include the Carlisle Catholic Schools Group as well as other primary schools in the locality. The school has good mechanisms to transfer to secondary schools. For instance, there are very good induction arrangements with the nearby Catholic high school. In addition, the physical education department leads lessons throughout the school year supporting sports skills development very well.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership and management of the school are **good** overall. The headteacher provides **very effective** leadership and ensures that the school is managed well. The governance of the school is **good** overall.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Very effective leadership by the headteacher results in all staff working as a team to give good attention to achievement whilst also creating a very strong family ethos.
- The senior management team is effective in directing the school, but a lack of representation for Years 1 and 2 reduces the quality of monitoring in this part of the school.
- The provision for special educational needs and for pupils in the Foundation Stage are managed well.
- The school is aware of its own strengths and weaknesses, but a lack of a strategic plan for releasing co-ordinators makes it difficult for some co-ordinators to monitor their subjects.
- Governors support the school well and carefully monitor the effectiveness of spending decisions, but could do more to monitor the curriculum.

### **Commentary**

24. The leadership, management and governance of the school are good, which is a similar situation to the last inspection. The headteacher has a very strong sense of purpose and vision for the school's educational direction. A strong teamwork between the head and his deputy ensures that the school provides pupils with a very good ethos of care and support within a Christian environment. The school successfully provides for the needs of all pupils. The senior management team, together with the effective contribution of the school administrative assistant ensures good day-to-day management. However, the overall structure of the senior management team is narrow and does not include a representative from Years 1 and 2. The school has recognised the need to broaden the structure of the senior management team and has strategies to do so.
25. School self-evaluation systems are effective in identifying the school's strengths and weaknesses. This is exemplified by the way the school has recognised the very recent decline in standards in Year 2, resulting in action to stop this. Performance management procedures contribute well to ensuring that all staff have clearly defined responsibilities for managing the curriculum and other aspects of the school's management. The information is combined with other data, for example from assessment, to create strategies to improve the school further. These are succinctly represented in a useful school development plan. Very good leadership by the headteacher and strong teamwork between teaching and support staff make sure that



the school's provision for both the Foundation Stage and for special educational needs are managed well. The leadership of National Curriculum subjects is generally good. Co-ordinators know their subject's strengths and weaknesses. This is despite a lack of planned, dedicated time for them to perform their management roles, especially with regard to monitoring the standard of teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2.

26. The governing body provides good governance. It fulfils its role well and is a supportive and effective group. Governors are well organised and make sure all statutory requirements are met. There is a particular strength in the way finances are managed to get the best possible value from the budget. Governors have a secure knowledge and understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, but there is too much reliance on the reports from the headteacher about the quality of the curriculum. Strategies for monitoring the curriculum, whilst satisfactory, are a relative weakness.

### Financial information

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

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	485 968	Balance from previous year	32 715
Total expenditure	488 014	Balance carried forward to the next	30 669
Expenditure per pupil	2 169		

27. Financial management is good and has improved since the last inspection. The budget deficit has been removed and comfortable surplus accrued, although it is set to fall this year. The slightly high surplus has been retained as a result of strategic planning related to protecting against changes in the number of pupils on roll. There are effective systems for ensuring the school gets the best from its income and for making sure that resources of staffing and accommodation are effectively used.

## **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 **good**.

28. The overall attainment of children starting school in the nursery is below average. An attractive and effective nursery class has been established since the last inspection, providing a good improvement in the provision. Achievement is good for all children. Children with special educational needs are well supported in class and in the booster groups, and they achieve well. Assessments at the start of each reception year show a marked improvement in achievement in all areas since the nursery was opened in 2000. Children start in the nursery with attainment that is below average. Good induction procedures, which include home visits, help children to settle quickly into school. There are currently 23 children attending morning sessions in the nursery who started when they were three, and 30 children attending full-time in the reception class.
29. Leadership of the Foundation Stage curriculum is good. The creativity and imagination of the co-ordinator and her very good understanding of how young children learn are evident in the very good range of interesting and purposeful activities that meet children's needs well. Following the building of the new nursery, she has established a cohesive team who co-operate well together to plan well focussed activities that link learning successfully in all areas. The new nursery building is bright and spacious and has direct access to an attractive outdoor area that extends the learning environment well. In contrast, the reception class is cramped, furnishings need updating and the lack of storage facilities gives it a cluttered appearance. Lack of space restricts some activities in the morning, though reception children benefit from using the nursery in the afternoon.
30. The quality of teaching is good overall in all areas. A strong feature is the valuable contribution of the very skilled teaching assistants, two of whom lead the nursery class and one who provides very good support in the reception class. Volunteer helpers, including parents and parishioners, make a regular and important contribution to children's learning. There are good assessment procedures and these are used well to match work to children's needs in all areas.

### **Personal, social and emotional development**

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

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

- Very good relationships between children and adults create an enthusiasm for learning.
- Independence is encouraged well.
- Some children find it difficult to listen on occasions.

#### **Commentary**

31. Children reach the standards expected for their age by the end of their time in the reception class. This area of learning is rightly given a high priority. Consistently good teaching by the teamwork of all adults enables children to achieve well. The very good range of activities shows a very good awareness of how young children learn and so most children sustain interest and develop very good attitudes to learning. Children develop a good understanding of their own faith and the culture and beliefs of others. Routines such as snack time provide good social occasions and the high expectations of courtesies such as *please* and *thank you* develop children's social skills well. A good feature is the way children's independence is encouraged as they plan their choosing activities each morning and colour them in on their diary. Children's self esteem is developed well as they receive cards and comments from the rest of the class on their special day in reception, and they select representatives for the school council.

### **Communication, language and literacy**

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

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

- Basic skills of reading and writing are taught systematically and with imagination.
- Listening skills are not so well developed.

#### **Commentary**

32. The good teaching, which places strong emphasis on developing reading and writing, helps all children to achieve well in these areas. Children reach the standards expected for their age by the end of their time in the reception class. There is a good focus on letter sounds throughout, for example, in rhymes in the nursery and in activities such as asking reception children to sit on the cushion with the appropriate sound. In the reception class children are encouraged to write in a wide range of situations, for example, higher-attainers write well-structured sentences in joined-up writing following their trip to "Tullie House". In the daily booster groups for children with special educational needs, a good range of strategies involving all the senses helps children to form letters and recognise sounds and so they achieve well. Children are encouraged to read regularly at home and at school and this consistent practice and methodical work on letter sounds helps most children to make good progress. Listening skills are developed satisfactorily. Stories are told in an interesting way to gain children's attention.

### **Mathematical development**

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

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

- Good planning, with strong emphasis on practical activities, helps children achieve well.
- Every chance is taken to use children's mathematical skills in other areas of learning.

#### **Commentary**

33. The good teaching and wide range of practical activities help children to gain a sound understanding of mathematical skills and they achieve well throughout the Foundation

Stage. Children reach the standards expected for their age by the end of their time in the reception class. In the nursery, every opportunity is taken to count and match, for example children act out a good range of rhymes to help them count to five and beyond, and match the plates and milk cartons to the number of children at each table in snack time. This is extended in the reception class, where work is well planned for different ability groups to develop arithmetic skills well, for example, higher-attaining children are suitably challenged when developing an understanding of tens and units in the *Mr. Tensticks* game. All children are encouraged to develop their skills as far as they can. For example, when playing in the sand, some children count as far as 34 when checking how many scoops fill the bucket. Children gain a sound understanding of measurement when comparing things that are heavy or light, such as when baking.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

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

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

- The outdoor area is used very well.
- There is a good range of visits to enhance learning.
- Accommodation in the reception class is cramped and this reduces the attraction of activities, such as using the sand and water.

### **Commentary**

34. Teaching and learning are good and children achieve well. They reach the standards expected for their age by the end of their time in the reception class. The imaginative development of the outdoor area as an extension to the classroom has helped to develop children's knowledge and understanding of the world. Areas such as the garden are inviting and children enjoy planting their seeds and plants and watching them grow. The hard work and expertise of the school caretaker has played an important part in preparing the area for all the children and in supporting groups in lessons. In the nursery, children learn to name a good range of fruit and plan an interesting range of toppings when baking pizza. In the reception class, children benefit from the space available outside, for example, in activities such as staining the dolls' clothes with ketchup and crayon before testing which combination of water and soap is most effective to get them clean. The indoor accommodation in the reception class is cramped. This reduces the attraction of activities such as the sand and water play because they have to be placed in a dark thoroughfare that has no natural light.
35. A good range of visits enhances learning well. Nursery children explore the local area, whilst the recent visit to the museum at a local hall helped reception children to compare the past and present. Learning was extended back in school as the role-play area was converted to a Victorian laundry complete with wash tubs and posers. Children's information and communication technology skills are developed to a suitable level as they operate the listening centres and use the computer to practice number games and use the paint program to create pictures.

### **Physical development**

Provision in physical development is **good**.

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

- Children use a good range of tools and implements.
- The outdoor area includes an interesting adventure area to improve physical skills.

### **Commentary**

36. Teaching and learning are good and all children achieve well. They reach the standards expected for their age by the end of their time in the reception class. A good range of activities that include using a wide range of implements such as paintbrushes, pencils, spades and clothes pegs, develop children's control and manipulative skills well. Adults take time to demonstrate how to use the tools correctly and so children improve their skills systematically. In snack time, from the nursery onwards, the children are offered a good range of fruits and become aware of what keeps them healthy. The adventure area outside is attractively and imaginatively laid out so that children enjoy climbing along the platform and through the tunnels. There is a good range of wheeled toys to help children improve control and co-ordination.

### **Creative development**

Provision in creative development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The teacher uses her creative expertise well to encourage the children.
- Children are provided with a good range of imaginative activities to enrich their learning.

### **Commentary**

37. Teaching and learning are good and the wide range of activities encourages children to achieve well. They reach the standards expected for their age by the end of their time in the reception class. Children in the reception class develop their colour-mixing skills well by blending pastels and paints on a large canvas, after looking at the good variety of Monet prints on display. A good feature in teaching is the way in which the themes in imaginative play areas are regularly changed to match work in other activities. For example, children enjoy dressing up and balancing a basket on their heads after they had listened to the story of *Handa's Surprise*. In music and movement, children were encouraged to think about their emotions as they move in response to the teacher's retelling of the Pentecost story.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Particularly good teaching in Years 4, 5 and 6 is a key factor in pupils achieving well overall.
- Standards in poetry are good.
- Good evaluations of the subject's strengths and weaknesses are made by the co-ordinator to seek ways of improving the quality of provision.

- Literacy across the curriculum is good overall, with good links to information and communication technology.
- Challenge and expectation could be higher for some pupils in Year 2.

### **Commentary**

38. Inspection evidence shows that pupils achieve well overall. Standards in Year 6 are currently average, though fewer pupils than usual are reaching the higher level. This judgment is consistent with the 2003 results at the end of Year 6, when results were in line with the national average for all schools. Inspection evidence shows that pupils make satisfactory progress in improving standards between Year 2 and Year 6. Achievement is good overall between Years 3 to 6, and particularly good in Years 5 and 6, where the quality of teaching improves significantly and the level of challenge for higher-attaining pupils is greater. At the end of Year 2, standards are currently in line with the national average. Over the last five years, standards have held up well, but in Year 2 they have dipped in the last two years as result of staff absence. Compared with similar schools, results in reading were in line with the national average and above the national average in writing. Whilst achievement is satisfactory at the end of Year 2, evidence from the analysis of the work done by pupils shows that higher-attaining pupils could be challenged more. Standards have remained relatively stable since the time of the previous inspection, although there has been a recent decline in standards in reading at the end of Year 2. Over the past three years, the performance of boys has been ahead of that of girls, but inspection findings indicate that this is no longer the case. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because of good quality support.
39. Pupils make very good progress in developing their skills of speaking and listening. By the time they reach the end of Year 6, pupils achieve well. They offer well considered and mature opinions and the vast majority can call on an extensive vocabulary. In lessons, pupils listen with respect to their teachers and to each other. Those who are sometimes reluctant to volunteer answers and opinions are easily cajoled into taking part by good teaching. Much of the credit for the maturity of pupils' responses goes to the strength of the programme of personal, social and health education and training in citizenship that is now being implemented throughout the school.
40. Standards in reading have fluctuated in recent years, but inspection findings indicate that standards are currently in line with the national average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. As part of the overall assessment of pupils' performance, good quality reading records enable teachers in their monitoring and tracking of individual pupils as they progress through the school. Pupils read regularly in school and at home and they are well motivated to read. The school has a small but good quality library collection to support reading and independent research. Because the library is located in the long main corridor, access can be difficult, but the vast majority of pupils develop library skills by the time they reach the end of Year 6. Discussions with pupils show that they have an extensive knowledge of recent popular fiction, but they are not as well versed in the classics of children's literature.
41. The quality of pupils' writing in Years 1 and 2 is inconsistent. Although standards are broadly average, the quality of presentation can be poor. By the end of Year 6, writing is much better and presentation is routinely of a high standard. The quality of writing of written poetry is especially impressive and older pupils are able to express complex and mature emotions when using a poetic style. Their most thought-provoking work is collected into anthologies and also used comprehensively in high quality displays of pupils' work.

42. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in Year 2, and very good in Year 6 with strengths also in Years 4 and 5. Pupils benefit from these strengths in their acquisition of skills in English. Analysis of the work done by older pupils shows an effective transfer of skills from English to other subjects in the curriculum. Teachers work hard to motivate their pupils and the response shows in the pride taken by pupils in producing their work. Marking is good overall, with the best occurring in Years 4, 5 and 6, where pupils are given advice on how they can improve their performance and set and evaluate their own targets. Pupils in all year groups are using the computer as a tool for improving the quality of their work and much of the work on display benefits from the creative use of word-processing applications. Throughout the school, teachers and pupils are ably supported by the dedicated work of the teaching assistants and other support staff.
43. Leadership and management of English is good overall and the co-ordinator has an impressive array of statistical information to illustrate performance in English. Analysis of assessment data is comprehensive, but could be simplified. The headteacher and co-ordinator have undertaken monitoring of teaching and learning, and this has identified areas for further improvement that is included in a comprehensive subject action plan. The main area for further improvement is the need for closer monitoring of the progress of higher-attaining pupils to raise performance to a higher level in the National Curriculum tests. Improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory.

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

44. Good examples exist throughout the school to indicate the increasing emphasis being placed on extending literacy skills across the curriculum. Information and communication technology is playing a growing part in improving literacy skills as pupils use it as a tool for learning in all subject areas. Marking of pupils' work in other subjects often draws attention to improving the use of English, and displays are used as a way of encouraging correct use of vocabulary in other subjects such as science.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve very well in Years 4, 5 and 6 because of the good quality of teaching.
  - A lack of challenge for higher-attaining pupils in Year 2 results in unsatisfactory achievement by the end of Year 2.
  - Teaching in Years 4, 5 and 6 is consistently good and pupils achieve well.
  - Test results are analysed thoroughly and used to improve the emphasis of teaching.
45. In Year 6, the number of children attaining the standard expected for their age is average, though fewer pupils than is usual reach the higher level. Standards are well below average in Year 2. Over the last five years, standards at the end of Year 2 have held up well, but they have dipped recently. This is primarily as a result of the impact of staff absence.
46. Pupils achieve satisfactorily overall, but their achievement varies across the school. Achievement in Year 2 is currently unsatisfactory because there is insufficient challenge for higher-attaining pupils. Achievement is very good in Years 4 to 6 because of consistently good teaching that improves rapidly the rate of learning for all pupils.

Assessment data from national tests shows that pupils in Years 3 and 6 made satisfactory progress in 2003 between when the Year 6 results were compared to those that the pupils gained in Year 2.

47. By Year 2, most pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of numbers to a hundred, and relate multiplication to repeated addition. Higher-attaining pupils have a greater understanding of patterns in number and are beginning to work with slightly larger numbers. The extensive use of worksheets in Years 1 and 2 hinders pupils' ability to set out work systematically and this also affects pupils' understanding of the number system. Pupils can solve simple word problems, but examples of pupils applying their skills in these problem-solving activities are too infrequent to build up confidence. By Year 6, regular practice and good, systematic teaching ensure that pupils have quick recall of multiplication and division facts and use these to calculate long multiplication and division sums successfully. However, practice in shape, space and measures, such as measuring and drawing angles accurately, and in applying skills to solve problems, is not covered in the same depth. This is a significant reason why a below average percentage of pupils gain standards in the national tests that exceed the expectations for their age.
48. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Slow pace and a lack of challenge are unsatisfactory elements in teaching in Year 2, and pupils in this class do not achieve as well as they should. This was seen in a Year 2 lesson when the introductory oral session, based on revision of number bonds to ten and counting in multiples, lasted for 40 minutes, rather than the planned ten minutes. Consistently good teaching in Years 4 to 6 is characterised by high expectations of pupils who respond well to the challenge of thinking and answering quickly to improve their arithmetic skills well. In a very good lesson in Year 5, the teacher employed an extensive range of strategies, such as making deliberate mistakes, to improve arithmetic skills. The teacher targeted questions sensitively so that all pupils were involved. Their resultant success in rounding numbers up and down and testing for divisibility helped pupils to gain in confidence and achieve very well in the lesson.
49. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. There is a strength in clear assessment procedures which are used well to identify individuals who need a boost to their attainment and to set targets for improvement. A thorough analysis of test results has identified problem-solving and place value as areas for improvement. Measures to improve these areas are evident in some classes and are starting to impact positively on standards. Monitoring of teaching and learning is satisfactory, but planned time for the co-ordinator's release is too ad hoc and this makes it difficult at times for the co-ordinator to follow through plans. The school has recognised that there is a need to restore standards at the end of Year 2 to the levels of previous years and is taking steps to do so. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

50. The use of mathematics in other subjects is satisfactory. Pupils throughout the school use a good range of graphs to display information and to answer questions in science. In Year 6, pupils compile a timeline to plot events in Victorian times. In Year 5, pupils make good use of the computer to handle data, for example, they have set up spreadsheets to calculate the cost of various elements for a party.



## SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Weaknesses in teaching enquiry skills to pupils in Year 2 has resulted in under achievement.
- Systematic planning and very effectively organised lessons in Years 4 to 6 are key factors in very good teaching in these classes.
- The quality of recorded work lacks challenge in Year 2.
- Teachers value and respect pupils' view and actively promote good levels of debate.

### Commentary

51. Standards in Year 6 are currently above average. This does not match the very high standards gained in the 2003 national tests primarily because of the ability of the current class. As a result of very good teaching, pupils achieve very well in Years 4 to 6. Assessment data shows that pupils make very good progress between Years 3 and 6 when the Year 6 results are compared to the results that the same pupils gained in Year 2. There is a particular strength in developing a good understanding of scientific ideas and in using suitable scientific vocabulary. There has been good improvement in standards in Year 6 since the last inspection when they were average. Standards in Year 2 are currently below average mainly because of a weakness in pupils' skills of scientific enquiry.
52. The quality of teaching and learning in Year 2 is satisfactory overall with some good class teaching of facts and information. In class discussions, pupils are introduced to a good range of scientific ideas, for example, in describing the properties of a range of everyday materials. Resources are used effectively to stimulate pupils' interest and, in one lesson, this led to some detailed debates about whether metal was flexible or not. Even though facts are taught well, not enough time is given to developing pupils' practical and investigative skills. The analysis of pupils' work indicates that there is an over-reliance on low level recording by completing worksheets, for example.
53. In Years 3 to 6, the quality of teaching is very good overall. It is particularly good in Years 4, 5 and 6. Teachers ensure that science lessons are meticulously planned. Activities are often set in a way that motivates and inspires pupils to want to find out rather than just solving mundanely presented scientific questions. For instance, as part of investigations into thermal insulation, pupils were asked to imagine that they were an ice cube person coming to school and they had to find ways of keeping their shape the longest. A strong feature of teaching is the high level of expectation for pupils to use the correct scientific terminology in order to explain what they think will happen and to interpret what they find out. A good balance is struck in Years 4 to 6 between activities directed by the teachers and work where pupils take the lead, but pupils could still be expected to make more decisions for themselves. In lessons observed, the teachers very skilfully set up outstanding levels of debate. Using "Talking Partners", pupils discussed their ideas and thoughts with another pupil before sharing their ideas with the class. Pupils clearly enjoyed having their views respected and this created enthusiasm amongst them. Pupils are encouraged by teachers to make use of information and communication technology in support of their learning, and strong links are made between numeracy and science. This is particularly the case when representing and interpreting data gathered from science experiments. In Year 6,

teachers prepare pupils very thoroughly for the national tests, and some particularly effective homework strategies contribute to reinforcing pupils' learning.

54. Leadership and management are good. There is a well-planned curriculum and effective strategies for assessing pupils' attainment and progress. Resources are very well managed and organised. The co-ordinator works hard to keep abreast of new initiatives in the subject and has implemented strategies for teaching scientific skills in Years 3 to 6. Although the co-ordinator has a very clear picture of the strengths of the subject, the relative weakness in Year 2 has not been addressed due to lack of planned co-ordinator time.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

The provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils in Year 6 are at ease with computers because they are given many opportunities to use them to support learning.
- Good management has ensured that provision is constantly reviewed and updated, although a lack of funds has limited the level of investment that the school would like.

### **Commentary**

55. Achievement is satisfactory. By the end of Year 6, pupils are at ease with using computers to support many aspects of learning and standards are in line with the national expectations for their age. In Years 1 and 2, pupils make steady progress and do as well as expected for their age by the end of Year 2. Standards are similar to those at the last inspection.
56. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall with good teaching by the co-ordinator. Pupils are encouraged to use computers to support a variety of aspects of their learning. Although the school is still awaiting interactive white board technology to assist teaching, basic skills and ideas are taught satisfactorily. Pupils are taught basic ICT skills effectively and then allowed to practise and develop these in class and by using the computer suite. A suitable range of ICT applications is systematically taught, although limited resources have reduced the teaching and learning of elements of computer control. By the end of Year 6, most pupils have a good grasp of how to access the Internet and do so confidently and enthusiastically. For instance, pupils are currently researching into many aspects of World War 2. One strength is in the use of the computer for communicating information. Pupils competently create documents using word-processing programmes, they make effective use of spreadsheets to represent data and they effectively prepare and present multimedia shows associated with their chosen topics. The weekly ICT club and projects undertaken by older pupils, such as publishing a school newsletter, are good at enabling pupils to develop their skills beyond those taught in class.
57. Leadership and management are good. Standards are improving and equipment is gradually being upgraded as funds allow. Resources are satisfactory, but showing signs of age. The lack of interactive whiteboards sets teachers at a disadvantage when compared with many other schools. There is a sensibly prioritised action plan for the subject's development that ensures that the quality of provision is maintained.

## Information and communication technology across the curriculum

58. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a good knowledge of using computers to support learning across the curriculum. Some good use is made to reinforce learning in science by using spreadsheets to represent experimental data. Challenging work involving using paint programmes to create images in the style of Picasso raises pupils' awareness that a computer is a tool for art and design as well.

## HUMANITIES

59. The quality of provision for **religious education** is not reported because the Voluntary Aided nature of the school deems that the Diocese inspects it. A firm judgement about provision could not be made in geography or history in the absence of sufficient primary evidence, but both subjects were sampled during the course of the inspection.
60. In **geography**, pupils' work was sampled and discussions were held with pupils in Year 2 and Year 6. Evidence indicates that standards are in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2 and above national expectations at the end of Year 6. Very good use is made of maps as pegs on which pupils can hang other information and pupils show a good knowledge of the importance of maps in fieldwork. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a secure knowledge of how their own area differs from other parts of the United Kingdom and also how it compares to areas in other parts of the world. Very good use is made of the immediate locality and the nearby area of the Lake District in supporting pupils' understanding of physical features and human influences on the environment. Pupils in Years 4 and 6 are able to attend a residential placement during which they can test out many of their skills in geography. Leadership and management of the subject are good and well supported by resources to ensure a prominent place for geography in the curriculum.
61. In **history**, pupils' work was sampled and discussions were held with pupils in Year 2 and Year 6. Evidence indicates that standards are in line with national expectations. Good links are apparent between history and geography, especially in the shared experiences of educational visits and fieldwork. The local area is used as a significant source of information and pupils show a good understanding of the historical significance of the area since Roman times. Pupils in Year 2 have a good understanding of significant events such as the Fire of London and can name a range of historically significant individuals. Satisfactory use is made of ICT by older pupils to gather information related to their history lessons. By the end of Year 6, pupils demonstrate an ability to make judgements and distinguish between fact, opinion and interpretation of historical data. Resources for history are satisfactory and leadership and management have provided a satisfactory and stable basis for the place of history in the curriculum.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

62. The limitations of time made it impossible to make a firm judgement on the provision for **art and design**, **design and technology** and **physical education**, although a limited range of evidence was gathered.

63. In **art and design**, the pupils' work on display around the school and in sketch books show that all aspects of the subject are covered and that drawing skills are of a good standard. Learning is enhanced by visits to art galleries to see examples of work by famous artists such as David Hockney and by the provision of a weekly sketch club, led by the skilled co-ordinator, which is well attended. There is a good emphasis on the direct teaching of skills, such as changing the appearance of paper by folding or pleating in Year 1, and sketching people in various actions to suggest movement in Year 6. Assessment procedures are developing and are satisfactory overall.
64. In **design and technology**, inspection evidence based on samples of pupils' work and discussions with the co-ordinators shows that National Curriculum requirements are met, but there is a relative weakness in providing activities related to structures and mechanisms. Staff make efforts to link design and technology activities to subjects across the curriculum, thereby making learning relevant to pupils. For instance, literacy is linked with design and technology in Year 4 when pupils make moving books. Pupils like design and technology and talk enthusiastically about projects that they have been involved in. The subject is satisfactorily led and managed, which is an improvement from the last inspection, when it was inadequate. The curriculum is suitably planned and resources are satisfactory.
65. Inspection evidence for **physical education** shows that the subject has a high status in the school. There is a good allocation of time given to the subject and a suitable range of activities are planned and provided for across the school. There is a strong emphasis given to swimming and, by the end of Year 6, the vast majority have good levels of confidence and exceed the standards expected for their age. Close links with the local secondary school make a good contribution to the physical education curriculum. Contribution from a lead teacher from that school is boosting the quality of provision and making a positive contribution to the quality of teaching in the school. Good use is made of a residential visit to enable pupils to experience outdoor adventurous activities. The school provides a good range of extracurricular sporting activities and pupils develop a healthy attitude to competitive sport through inter-school events. The movement programme makes a positive contribution to the levels of agility, co-ordination and balance of many pupils.

## Music

Provision in music is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in singing are good through the school.
  - Standards in composition are less well developed.
  - The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural development.
66. Standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are broadly average. There is a strength in singing throughout the school. Children in Year 2 sing successfully in two-part rounds and convey appropriate sad and happy feelings well when singing. Pupils in Year 6 are developing a satisfactory understanding of scale and intervals. This contributes well to their ability to learn new songs quickly and accurately. There has been satisfactory improvement overall since the last inspection, with an expanded range of music available for children to listen to and appreciate. The school recognises that a comparative weakness in composition remains from the last inspection, but it has

purchased new resources to support teachers in this area, although this is too recent to have had an impact on standards.

67. Achievement is satisfactory overall. Pupils enjoy singing in class lessons and in assembly, and pupils participate enthusiastically in school productions and in a combined concert with other schools. A significant spiritual element is evident when pupils sing together in assembly and when pupils hum quietly to themselves during the playing of *Shine Jesus Shine*. Cultural development is enhanced as pupils listen to a range of music by different composers and in interpreting music in the disco- dancing club.
68. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Non-specialist teachers are supported satisfactorily by a commercial scheme that includes lesson plans and taped music. These enable teachers to fulfil requirements of the curriculum but the delivery can be a little stilted. Learning is enlivened by instrumental accompaniment to lessons as when the teacher played the accordion to improve the quality of singing of *London's Burning* in Years 1 and 2. In a very good lesson in Year 6 the co-ordinator used his expertise on the guitar to demonstrate the meaning of musical vocabulary and pitch, and good reminders about the importance of correct diction improved the quality of singing very well. The very good relationships gave pupils the confidence to try the World War 2 songs and engendered great enjoyment in singing.
69. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. A strong element is the good role model provided by the very good teaching of the co-ordinator, with a comparative weakness in the monitoring of teaching and learning in other lessons.

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

70. Provision is good. Personal, social and health education and citizenship is a strong and regular feature of pupils' learning throughout the school. Pupils take part in an extensive range of experiences, including the innovative movement programme, as well as the effective class councils and a well-established school council. The caring and sharing ethos of the school plays a significant part in the implementation of this area of learning. In their councils, pupils show a high degree of tolerance and respect and are provided with good role models by the adults who teach and care for them. Through developments in the overall programme, pupils have come to a deeper understanding of their own emotional responses to situations and have grown in their tolerance of the opinions and emotions of others. In a Year 5 class council observed during the course of the inspection, the maturity of the pupils in expressing their thoughts and feelings was very impressive. Pupils are set challenging tasks and targets and their responses ensure that standards are high. Teachers take a full role in all activities and show a high degree of respect for the views expressed by pupils. The monitoring of the impact of the movement programme indicates that it too has had a significant impact on pupils' behaviour, with beneficial outcomes in pupil performance in a range of subjects. Leadership and management are very good and the recently appointed co-ordinator has had a major impact on improving provision and practice throughout the school.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

The leadership of the headteacher	2
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).*