

INSPECTION REPORT

St. Richard's RC Primary School

Hull

LEA area: Kingston-upon-Hull

Unique reference number: 118054

Headteacher: Mrs Carmel Hardy

Lead inspector: Mrs Margaret Shepherd

Dates of inspection: 16th to 19th May 2005

Inspection number: 267940

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:	338
School address:	Marfleet Lane Hull
Postcode:	HU9 5TE
Telephone number:	01482 781928
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Elizabeth Hawkins
Date of previous inspection:	19 th April 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St. Richard's R.C. Primary School serves the pupils from a very deprived social area. It is situated in the same ward as the docklands and near to the prison to the east of the city of Hull. There are 338 pupils on roll, 183 boys and 155 girls. Attainment on entry is very low, with particularly poor language and communication skills. Thirty-nine per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is above average. Eighteen per cent of pupils have special educational needs, which is average. Point five per cent of pupils have full statements of special educational needs, which is below average. The school works very hard to identify these pupils early, give them targeted support and move them off the register. Three per cent of pupils come from ethnic minority groups, point four per cent have English as an additional language. Two per cent of pupils are looked after. The school is organised into two parallel classes in each age group. The nursery and reception classes are called Foundation 1 and 2. Each year group functions together in a shared area, both with outdoor learning areas. There is a graduate teacher student working in Foundation 2. Forty-nine children attend the Foundation 1 class on a part time basis and thirteen children attend two part time sessions each day. During the inspection there was a supply teacher in a Year 6 class who had only started working with the pupils that week. The school employs a team of reading assistants who work in the school every afternoon. They predominantly support infant pupils but also work with junior pupils. The school also employs a behaviour mentor and a learning link worker. There is a major initiative running through the school called TALK. This is a system to extend pupils' learning through talking regularly with a partner. There are age phase co-ordinators responsible for pairs of age groups as well as overall key stage co-ordinators. The deputy headteacher teaches music and pupils with special

educational needs. The headteacher teaches Year 5 for one afternoon a week. The school's accommodation is very spacious because it was previously a secondary school. The levels of mobility are higher than average in the current Year 6 class, but the mobility in other classes is average. The school is part of an Education Action Zone and Excellence in Cities. It is involved with Sure Start, the Children's Fund and the New Deal for Communities.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
11328	Margaret Shepherd	Lead inspector	Science, information and communication technology, personal, social and emotional education, pupils with English as an additional language
9986	William Twiss	Lay inspector	
22452	Mary Farman	Team inspector	English, music, pupils with special educational needs
30785	Sara Storer	Team inspector	Mathematics, art and design, design and technology, physical education
8839	Mike Egerton	Team inspector	Foundation Stage, geography, history

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **very good** school with many excellent features. The headteacher's leadership and management are excellent. She creates highly effective teams who work harmoniously together within strong Christian principles. Standards in Year 6 are above average in English, mathematics and science and well above expectations in music. Personal development is very good. Teaching is very good with excellent features. The school provides very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Children make a very good quality start to their education in Foundation 1 and 2¹ and then build steadily on this learning throughout the school, adding excellent value to their standards by Year 6.
- Standards are rising overall apart from handwriting, which remains a weakness.
- Pupils with special educational needs, pupils with English as an additional language and looked after pupils achieve well.
- Relationships are excellent, spiritual and moral development are excellent, pupils have very positive attitudes towards school and behave very well.
- Leadership and management are very good overall.
- The partnership between teachers and support staff is excellent and ensures high levels of inclusion; staff use the very good quality assessment very effectively.
- The curriculum is very good quality and has very effective enrichment; opportunities are missed to extend ICT skills across other subjects.
- Partnership with the community is excellent, links with parents and other schools are very good. Care and welfare are very good.

There has been very good improvement since the previous inspection. The previous key issues have all been resolved, standards have risen and there have been improvements in many different aspects of the school's work.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Year 6 results

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

The 2003 Year 6 classes had a higher proportion of more able pupils than usual. The trend in standards is higher than average when taken over the past four years. For this time span standards compared with similar schools have been consistently well

¹ Foundation 1 is the nursery and Foundation 2 is the reception class.

above average. The inspection judges achievement as consistently **very good**. Standards in Year 6 are above average in English, mathematics and science and well above expectations in music. The school places a high emphasis on basic skills and has high levels of expertise in music.

Standards in the national tests in 2004 in Year 2 were below average in reading and well below average in writing and mathematics. Compared with similar schools standards were above average in reading and below average in writing and mathematics. The inspection judges standards in reading and science as average and below average in writing and mathematics. There is a very high priority in reading; in science the emphasis on practical work has raised standards. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are above expectations because these pupils have benefited from using the computer suite from reception.

Standards in reception are on track to be above expectations in personal, social and emotional development. They are below the expected level in physical and creative development. In all other areas of learning² standards are well below expectations. This represents very good achievement from the very low standards that children have when they enter the school.

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good because the school's provision for personal development is excellent. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **very good** overall with excellent spiritual and moral development. Pupils' attendance is satisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is **very good**.

The quality of teaching is **very good**. Teachers work in close partnership with the very good quality teaching assistants. They use the very good quality assessment systems very effectively to track each pupil's progress carefully.

The quality of the curriculum is very good. The development of literacy and numeracy across the curriculum is good but some opportunities are missed to include ICT skills. Pupils are fully included in the curriculum. Every single member of the school team plays a valuable role in the school.

Care and welfare are very good and ensure that every child matters.

Partnership with the community is excellent, links with parents and other schools are very good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **very good** overall. The leadership of the headteacher is excellent and provides a very clear driving force for the work of the school. Her management is excellent and ensures very consistent systems throughout the school to raise standards. She works very closely with the very good

² The other areas of learning which form the Foundation 1 and 2 curriculum are communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world.

quality deputy headteacher. The leadership and management of key staff are very good. The administrative team is very efficient. Governance is very good and the chair's leadership is very effective.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents appreciate the work of the school. Pupils are delighted to come to school and greatly value the teaching teams and the headteacher.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- implement the plans to raise standards in handwriting;
- implement the plans to extend ICT across the full curriculum.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Achievement is consistently **very good** through the school. Children enter the school with **very low** standards. In reception standards are **well below** expectations, in Year 2 standards are **below** average and by Year 6 standards are **above** average.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in Year 6 are above average in English, mathematics and science and well above expectations in music.
- Standards in Year 2 are above expectations in ICT, average in science and below average in English and mathematics.
- Children in the Foundation classes achieve extremely well in personal, social and emotional development and make good progress in all other areas of learning.
- Pupils with special educational needs, pupils with English as an additional language and looked after pupils achieve well.

Commentary

Foundation classes

1. Children enter the Foundation 1 class with very low standards. In many cases language skills are extremely basic. They receive a high quality start to their learning. Provision for personal, social and emotional development is excellent and standards are on track to be above the expected level by the end of reception. This represents excellent achievement. They gain very good personal skills, such as waiting their turn. Standards in communication, language and learning and mathematical development are on track to be well below the expected level. This represents good achievement when standards on entry are considered. Children develop a love of books but have great difficulties in expressing themselves due to their very limited vocabulary. They enjoy mathematics but have a very simple understanding of key mathematical principles. Standards in knowledge and understanding of the world are on track to be well below the expected level. In the aspect of ICT, standards are higher because of the very good quality equipment. Standards in creative and physical development are below the expected level.

Key Stage 1

<i>Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2004</i>		
Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	14.9 (15.6)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	12.4 (14.2)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	14.0 (15.7)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 53 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. Standards in Year 2 in the national tests in 2004 were below average in reading and well below average in writing and mathematics. Teacher assessment showed standards in science as well below expectations. Compared with similar schools, standards were above average in reading and below average in writing and mathematics. Standards in this year group were lower than usual because there were more pupils with special educational needs in this year group as well as a high proportion of boys. In 2003, comparisons with similar schools showed standards as well above average in reading and above average in writing and mathematics. The inspection judges standard as rising again. Achievement is very good. Standards in listening are at the expected level, which represents excellent achievement over time. Pupils listen very carefully both to each other and to adults. Speaking skills are below expectations but improving due to the very effective implementation of the TALK project. The school places a high emphasis on reading and standards are average. Pupils enjoy reading and tackle new words with confidence. Writing is below average overall. Pupils write interesting stories but their handwriting is not well formed. Standards in mathematics are below average. Most pupils handle numbers confidently and enjoy mathematical investigations, but the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level overall is below average. Standards have risen significantly in science due to a high emphasis on practical science and very well focused assessment systems. Standards are above the expected level in ICT. The current Year 2 pupils have greatly benefited from using the computer suite throughout their time in the school.

Key Stage 2

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2004		
Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.7 (29.0)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	27.5 (29.1)	27.0 (26.8)
science	29.2 (29.4)	28.6 (28.6)
<i>There were 43 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.</i>		

3. The 2004 national tests show that the improvement of the Year 6 pupils' standards since their tests in Year 2 was well above average compared with all types of schools. Standards have been consistently well above average compared with similar schools for the past three years. The trend over time is above the national average. The inspection judges achievement as very good throughout the junior classes. Over the four years pupils spend in this age phase they continually build on their skills and understanding. By Year 6 standards are above average in English, mathematics and science. The rise in standards is due to whole school initiatives to improve the quality of teaching through the school. Pupils read fluently and write confidently. In mathematics they handle numbers confidently and tackle mathematical investigations well. Pupils have a very good knowledge of the full scientific curriculum. Standards

in music are well above expectations due to the high emphasis on this subject and the expertise of the deputy headteacher.

4. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because the school tracks their progress very carefully and provides carefully focused support both in lessons and in withdrawal groups. The school's high emphasis on communication supports the pupils with English as an additional language very effectively. The high priority on personal development provides a very good basis for the looked after pupils to gain self-esteem and tackle learning positively.
5. Improvement is good since the previous inspection. Progress was satisfactory overall and now it is good. Standards in music have risen significantly.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **very good**. Relationships are **excellent**. Their spiritual and moral development is **excellent** and social and cultural development is **very good**. Attendance is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have very good attitudes to learning.
- Behaviour in lessons and around the school is very good.
- Relationships between all staff and pupils are excellent and the school's approach to promoting harmony is outstanding.
- The nurturing of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very effective.
- The school works very effectively to promote attendance and punctuality.

Commentary

6. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good. An interesting and exciting curriculum coupled with high quality teaching throughout the school encourage all pupils to take an active part in school life. Pupils enjoy working together and helping each other learn.
7. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is very good. All staff follow the school's approach to assertive discipline very consistently. As a result, pupils feel safe and secure knowing they are treated fairly. The learning mentor and lunchtime staff support pupils very effectively during lunch and playtime breaks by encouraging good manners and fair play. Every opportunity is taken to praise and reward good behaviour. Playground buddies are watchful and offer support to younger pupils during playtimes.
8. Relationships between all staff and pupils are excellent. Staff model good behaviour and show great kindness and consideration for each other. This has a powerful effect upon pupil behaviour as they develop self-control. Teamwork is very evident across the school. Staff ensure that pupils have very regular opportunities to work in pairs and groups. They have very good skills of co-operation and thoroughly enjoy working collaboratively. As a result, they develop an increasing ability to manage conflict and resolve issues. The

school's approach to promoting harmony is outstanding. A very carefully planned personal, social and health curriculum, together with high quality assemblies, provide the corner stones. Equal opportunities to include race relations and anti-bullying are tackled explicitly on a regular basis. These themes are embraced by all staff throughout the day and reinforced through the curriculum.

9. The school promotes pupils' personal development very successfully. Provision for spiritual and moral development are excellent. There is a very strong focus on Christianity, which greatly benefits pupils who would not otherwise have experience of this faith. Frequent opportunities during assemblies and lessons foster pupils' curiosity as they experience story telling, drama and music that promote 'individual reflection' time. Pupils of all ages express their thoughts and feelings without fear of ridicule. As one pupil said in response to Monet's Impressions, 'It is endless'. Moral development is highly effective and ensures that even the youngest of pupils 'make right choices'. Social development is very good and pupils are encouraged to take responsibility throughout the school. Pupils take an active interest in school life, as shown by the high numbers of pupils involved in a wide range of clubs and extra-curricular activities. The playground buddies and school council are examples of how teams work together to improve the school. Cultural development is now very good. Learning experiences are enriched by theme weeks, for example Africa, India and Sri Lanka. The use of visitors representing different cultures has stimulated local and global awareness. As a result, pupils ask questions about other cultures and recognise their contribution to society.

10. Improvement since the previous inspection is very good. The school has sustained the strengths identified in the previous inspection and has improved many other aspects.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)			
Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	5.4	School data:	0.1
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. The school succeeds in meeting the many challenges of keeping rates of attendance in line with the national average. The vast majority of pupils come to school on time. There are very good procedures in place to promote attendance. Clear targets are set for attendance and punctuality and all unexplained absences and lateness are followed up. The headteacher makes continuous monitoring of attendance a key priority. The high quality administrative staff work in harmony with the Education Welfare Officer to promote attendance and punctuality. They make a substantial contribution to keeping it in line with the national picture. The number of exclusions rose last year because the school introduced a zero tolerance policy. This was very

successful and had a very positive impact on behaviour throughout the school.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

<i>Categories used in the Annual School Census</i>	<i>No of pupils on roll</i>	<i>Number of fixed period exclusions</i>	<i>Number of permanent exclusions</i>
White – British	353	8	0
White – any other White background	1	0	0
Chinese	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	2	0	0
Parent/pupil preferred not to say	6	0	0

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is **very good**. Teaching, learning and assessment are **very good**. The curriculum is **very good** with **very good** enrichment. Care and welfare are **very good**. Partnership with the community is **excellent** and links with parents and other schools are **very good**.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **very good** in Foundation, infant and junior classes. Assessment is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a high level of consistency of teaching and learning strategies in use throughout the school.
- The partnership between teachers and support staff is extremely good.
- Teachers manage pupils' behaviour skilfully and there are high levels of productivity in lessons.
- Pupils have a high capacity for collaborative work due to the extremely effective use of the TALK project.
- There are excellent features in teaching and learning in English, mathematics and music.
- Assessment systems are rigorous and staff use them very well to target future learning.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 59 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
5 (8%)	34 (58%)	20 (34%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

12. Teachers respond very well to the staff development that the school provides. This ensures that new initiatives became part of each class' everyday working patterns. The high emphasis on practical and interesting tasks ensures that pupils take a very active part in their own learning. The school has worked very hard to provide consistent systems to outline the key learning that will take place during lessons. Staff are very successful in identifying this at the beginning of lessons in a language that pupils can understand. Pupils expect to explain to staff and each other what they are learning and whether they need more time to reinforce the new skills or understanding. Pupils thoroughly enjoy celebrating their achievement at the end of lessons.
13. The headteacher and senior staff set a very high priority on teamwork. This results in extremely effective partnerships between teachers and the high quality support staff. All adults have a very clear understanding of the learning planned for lessons and the organisational strategies that will ensure that it takes place. Pupils with special educational needs learn well because their tasks are carefully matched to their needs and based carefully on the skills and understanding they have already developed. All staff set a high priority in encouraging pupils to do their best, which results in pupils trying their best to achieve their goals.
14. Staff are very aware of the need to provide a very firm framework for pupils' behaviour. Teachers outline their expectations very clearly during lessons and

pupils appreciate that lessons are a time to concentrate hard and complete their work. Lessons are calm and well-ordered occasions, allowing each pupil to gain knowledge and skills at a good rate.

15. The use of the TALK project in the school is extremely effective. Teachers organise pupils very carefully into different partners for different subjects. Pupils move quickly into these pairs and have high levels of collaboration in solving problems or answering questions. Whether it be in whole-class sessions or in carrying out tasks, pupils discuss their work with confidence. This is having a very beneficial impact on the development of language skills, as well as on thinking skills. Pupils with English as an additional language benefit particularly well from this teaching because it gives them opportunities to extend their language and understanding. Looked after pupils also benefit from the paired system as it extends their confidence.
16. Features of the excellent teaching includes a very fast pace to lessons, very skilful questioning and extremely high expectation. Pupils rise to the great challenges that are set in these lessons and strive to reach those expectations. These lessons feature all of the initiatives that the school has introduced to improve the quality of teaching. The combination of those strategies has a powerful impact on the pace of pupils' learning.
17. There are very good assessment systems throughout the school. They combine twice yearly formal assessment and daily informal assessments very effectively. The systems to track pupils' individual progress over time are detailed and well organised. The age phase co-ordinators analyse this data very carefully and then discuss the findings in depth with class teachers. This ensures that pupils achieve steadily throughout the school. Teachers use careful records to assess pupils' progress during lessons and there are very clear targets for pupils to track their own progress. Daily planning is based firmly on previous assessment, which ensures that pupils' learning builds consistently well over time.
18. Improvement since the previous inspection is very good.

The curriculum

The school provides pupils of all abilities with a **very good** curriculum. Enrichment and out of school activities are **very good**. Provision for children in the Foundation classes is **very good**. Accommodation and resources are **very good** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides a very well balanced curriculum with very effective links across subjects, apart from ICT where some links are underused.
- Excellent teamwork and provision for inclusion ensure pupils of all abilities have full access to the curriculum and the excellent provision for personal development.
- There is very good provision for pupils with special educational needs, pupils who have English as an additional language, more-able pupils and looked after pupils.

- The involvement of the whole-school team ensures very good provision for curriculum enrichment and extra-curricular activities.
- The classrooms, library, outdoor play areas and school grounds are of very good quality.

Commentary

19. The school ensures that the curriculum gives all pupils very rich experiences in all subjects. Their work is stimulating, exciting and totally relevant to their needs and interests. There is a very good balance between different subjects, which is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils are very well prepared for the next stage in their education. All statutory requirements are met, including drugs and sex education. Teachers plan very carefully for links across different subjects, although they miss some opportunities for ICT in some subjects. The blocks of time that the school devotes to each subject are working very well.
20. The school's strategies for inclusion are excellent. Planning across year groups is meticulous and ensures equal access to the curriculum. Each individual's progress, academic and personal, is checked and tracked and the school checks test results by gender, ability and ethnicity. Staff use these results to provide work that fully meets all pupils' needs. This is particularly effective in improving the performance of more-able pupils and those with particular talents. The grouping of pupils by ability for English and mathematics works very well.
21. The school makes very good provision for pupils with special educational needs and behaviour difficulties. It ensures they have full access to the National Curriculum and takes account of the pupils' needs in all work. All staff follow the Code of Practice and ensure pupils are included in all school activities. This ensures that pupils with special educational needs achieve well. Provision for gifted and talented pupils is very good, as is the provision for pupils with English as an additional language and for looked after pupils.
22. The whole school team works very hard to provide a very good quality programme of extra-curricular activities. The behaviour mentor and the school's caretaker play a very important part in the very good out of school provision. They organise sporting activities and set very good examples to pupils. The school makes very good provision to increase pupils' self-confidence and skills through regular concerts and performances. It puts the pupils' interests first in all aspects of curriculum enhancement.
23. The school's attractive and well-stocked library is an improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils use this for class sessions on learning how to select books and for independent research. The stimulating and good-sized classrooms, along with the attractive grounds and newly complete peace garden, make a very positive contribution to pupils' learning and achievement. Pupils are inspired to learn by their very good quality surroundings and the good range of learning resources available.

24. Improvement since the previous inspection is very good.

Care, guidance and support

Procedures for ensuring the pupils' care, welfare and health and safety are **very good**. The support, advice and guidance given to the pupils are **very good**. The school has **very good** procedures for involving the pupils in its work and development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school's induction processes are very good.
- The staff take the pupils' welfare and safety seriously.
- The staff know the pupils well and give them very effective support and guidance.
- The pupils trust their teachers and staff and feel fully included in the school's work.

Commentary

25. Staff and governors work very hard to welcome pupils of all ages into the school. Starting in Foundation 1, staff provide very good information for the parents and carers which sets out the school's high expectations. The headteacher and a governor reinforce the school's aims and ethos very effectively because they meet all parents of children who apply to join the school. Home visits add to the quality of induction and are used well to give staff a picture of each child's need. The school supports pupils very effectively when they join the school partway through the year. The school's strong induction procedures help the children to settle in quickly and to progress smoothly through the school. They make a significant contribution to the very good progress that the children make.
26. All staff are committed to the school's values and its Christian ethos of care. They are fully alert to pupils' needs. Staff understand the diverse needs of the local community and the families that the school serves. They monitor personal and academic development well and offer sensitive support wherever it is needed. A national charity comes into school regularly and works in partnership with the teachers and mentors to help pupils believe in themselves.
27. Staff work very hard to improve the pupils' self-esteem. The innovative nurturing work that the school does helps the pupils to understand and explore their feelings and to set themselves relevant challenges. The governors and staff regularly assess risks that may occur in the school premises and in lessons. They act swiftly to rectify any shortcomings and consequently the school is a safe and welcoming community. Child protection arrangements are very robust. The school has very good links with the professional support agencies, which help with matters such as routine health screening and confidential advice.
28. The pupils have excellent relationships with staff. They feel confident in raising even the most personal issues with staff because they know they will be treated

with kindness and respect. The school has introduced a worry box through which pupils can confidentially seek help and talk to a Worry Angel if they feel this is appropriate. Pupils of all ages value their school and believe that they can offer ideas and change things.

29. Improvement since the previous inspection is very good. The school's relentless work on helping all pupils to achieve has paid off and the standard of care and guidance is now very good.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's links with the parents are **very good**. Links with the local community are **excellent**. The school's links with other schools are **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school uses innovative approaches to build links with the parents.
- The headteacher consults widely with the parents and acts on their views.
- The school has extremely productive links with the community and very good links with other schools.

Commentary

30. The school harnesses resources very well to build links with the parents and carers. There is very effective deployment of an educational link worker to help parents and carers appreciate the importance of learning at home. The school caretaker is well respected by the parents. He has enthused them to become active members of the Parents, Staff and Friends Association, which raises considerable sums of money. Parents provide valuable support for groups in lessons. They appreciate the pupils' assemblies and performances and keenly support events like the Summer Fayre.
31. The school consults the parent or carer regularly, values their views and acts on their suggestions. The parents and carers feel that communication between the home and school is very good and they feel confident that any concerns they have receive a fair hearing and prompt response.
32. The school works extremely hard to create links with the community, which are excellent. Local businesses support the school very well. Each of the community links has the purpose of helping the pupils to achieve, such as the link with the local conservation area. The school uses the New Deal for Communities Initiative well. Links with the secondary schools are very good. From these links the staff and teachers learn from each other and exchange ideas. Positive links with colleges help teachers to train in their chosen profession and offer opportunities to students of child care to gain valuable experience.
33. There has been very good improvement since the previous inspection.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **very good** overall. Leadership and management of the headteacher are **excellent**. Leadership and management of key staff are **very good**. The governance of the school is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher sets an extremely clear educational direction for raising standards in both academic and personal development within a Christian context.
- Key staff work very effectively to lead their areas of responsibility.
- Governors have a very good understanding of the work of the school.
- High quality personnel and very efficient systems ensure that administration is efficient and effective.

Commentary

34. The headteacher provides a very clear driving force for the work of the school. She has a very clear commitment to providing a Christian context for every pupil's learning. She leads high quality initiatives in the school to extend this context, such as the construction of a beautiful peace garden. She is extremely effective in introducing and sustaining new initiatives. She sets very clear priorities for the work of the school. Her determination to provide high quality support for individual pupils in areas such as reading and behaviour management has a very positive impact on standards. She sets very high professional standards herself, which provides an excellent role model for both staff and pupils. She sets great store by creating high quality teams within the staff and is very successful in establishing high quality communication systems throughout the school. Her very high quality management ensures that there are very effective systems running through the school. This is evident in the very high level of consistency of initiatives, such as the TALK project. The high levels of consistency provide pupils with a very secure framework for their learning as they move through the school. The headteacher is extremely effective in working with the community to extend the quality of the school's provision.
35. The headteacher works very closely with the very good quality deputy headteacher. Their skills complement each other very well. The deputy headteacher plays a key role in many aspects of the school's work. She sets an excellent example in her own teaching and leads special educational needs provision very effectively. All co-ordinators have a pride in their responsibilities. The very effective monitoring systems set up through the school ensure that they gain a clear understanding of the work across the different age groups.
36. The governing body has a high level of commitment to its work. The chair leads very effectively. She is in very regular contact with the headteacher and ensures that the organisation of committees works efficiently. Governors have clearly designated responsibilities and provide a wide range of expertise for carrying out their roles. There are very good links between governors and subject co-ordinators with clearly organised meetings to share information.

37. The headteacher ensures that the daily life of the school runs smoothly and that systems are in place for long-term efficiency. The administrative team works very well together and ensures that key areas, such as attendance and the monitoring of the budget, are carried out effectively. The headteacher is very successful in winning grants from a range of different sources. She ensures that consideration is taken of future budget implications in order to sustain new initiatives. The school uses the principles of best value very well. It greatly values the opinions of both its pupils and its parents and takes action to respond to their views. Staff development is very effective and is clearly linked to performance management. The school takes its responsibilities to education very seriously and plays a valuable role in training students to become teachers.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004			
Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	1,061,104	Balance from previous year	114,675
Total expenditure	1,067,571	Balance carried forward to the next	108,208 ³
Expenditure per pupil	3,103		

³ This substantial surplus was used to sustain the future staffing levels and to sustain funded initiatives that were then transferred to the school's own budget, such as the reading assistants and the learning mentors. It was also used for accommodation improvements to the playgrounds and the gymnasium.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

38. Children get a high quality start to their education in the Foundation 1 and 2 classes. When children first enter Foundation 1 the majority have skills that are very much lower than the expected levels. Their speech is difficult to understand and answers to questions are a single word at best. They are very immature for their age and have poor social skills and very sparse knowledge of the world in which they live. While in the Foundation classes, children, including those with special educational needs, achieve extremely well in personal, social and emotional development and in the other areas of learning achievement is good. Despite this marked development, very few are likely to have met the early learning goals by the end of the reception class and the large majority enter Year 1 with attainment which is well below expectations for their age. Problems with speaking skills persist and have an adverse effect on children's ability to express themselves in language and literacy, mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world.
39. Although the Foundation classes are some distance apart, teachers and support staff work closely together as a Foundation team. Leadership and management are very good and have led to joint planning across both age groups and activities that are sharply focused on the key needs of the children. Staff rigorously assess children during their activities and use these assessments very effectively as the basis for an individual progress file for each child. The quality of both the planning and the assessment procedures is very good and a strength of the work in the Foundation classes. Teaching is very good with significant strengths in personal and social development. As the children become older, changes in teaching and learning styles are phased in gradually and, by the time children reach the end of the Foundation 2 year, they are beginning to enjoy elements of the literacy and numeracy strategies. In both the Foundation classes a significant contribution to the children's learning comes from the work of the support staff who are skilled in intervening in the children's activities and moving the learning forward. In both classes, staff work very hard to forge constructive links with parents and to involve them in their children's learning. This is an area the school feels strongly about and intends to continue to seek ways of improving. Improvement since the last inspection has been very good.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for children's personal, social and emotional development is **excellent**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In all the children's activities, the teachers promote this aspect of the children's learning extremely well.
- Relationships between the children and adults are extremely high quality and help children to develop confidence and self-esteem.

- Staff provide extremely high quality opportunities for children to develop personal skills.

Commentary

40. Teachers place an extremely strong emphasis on this area of learning in both Foundation classes and achievement is excellent. In the nursery children soon begin to learn the classroom routines and how they are expected to behave. They understand that it is necessary to take turns and the group waiting to identify the hidden shapes on the 'smartboard' wait patiently for their turn. Routines are consistently applied in both classes and these provide children with security and helps them to become independent. When sitting with the children, staff frequently engage them in talking about personal and social aspects of their work, such as the importance of taking care of things. One of the notable features of group work is the way in which children relate to the staff and to each other. In Foundation 2 class, a group of painters used a rhyming song to decide who was going to have the red paint first and as they continued to paint they made helpful comments to each other about their work. Teaching and learning are excellent in this area of learning, leading to very positive learning. The progress children make in this area of learning is extremely rapid and they are on track to reach standards that are above the expected level by the end of reception.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff provide very effective opportunities for children to develop a love of books and stories.
- Children's listening skills improve so well because staff place a high priority on this aspect of their learning.
- Staff work very effectively to extend children's vocabulary.

Commentary

41. Children have severe language problems on entry to the school but the very good teaching and learning ensure that they achieve well. However, their very low starting point means that they are on track to be well below expectations by the end of reception. Activities are very carefully planned to meet the needs of all the children. Books are very well displayed in both classes, they are all bright, colourful and easily accessible to the children. As a result of this high focus on books, the children readily go to pick them up to look through them and enjoy the pop-up pictures. Two boys found the pop-up story of 'Jack and the Beanstalk' and, while they waited for their turn on the shape game, they both laughed and talked about the pictures. This early interest in books is fostered by the Foundation classes' staff and lays the foundation for good reading attitudes in Years 1 and 2. Stories are often used as the introduction to topics the children are studying and as the focus in other areas of learning such as singing. Listening skills are very poor when children first enter the

Foundation 1 class, but the staff focus very rigorously on these skills and insist on having the attention of all the children before an activity begins. This rigorous approach means that, by the time the children are in the Foundation 2 class, they know what is expected of them and they listen carefully to each other and the teacher. Children have very poorly developed language skills, their range of vocabulary is very limited and they find it very hard to put sentences together. In spite of the hard work of the staff and the wealth of opportunity they provide for the children, this continues to persist and inhibits not only oral responses, but the move toward expressing themselves in writing. This aspect is a major focus for teachers in all the areas of learning. The weaknesses became very evident during class discussion time. While children were eager to make a contribution, when given the opportunity, most struggled to find the words to express themselves and often resorted to repeating something someone had already said.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff provide very interesting mathematical activities and children thoroughly enjoy their number work.
- Children build their confidence very systematically in handling small numbers.
- Staff give children plenty of very good quality opportunities to reinforce new mathematical learning.

Commentary

42. Teaching and learning are very good. However, the severe language difficulties that children have on entry to the school restrict their overall achievement. Nevertheless, achievement is good and children are on track to be well below expectations by the end of reception. Children's enjoyment of mathematics builds gradually throughout their time in the Foundation classes as their confidence in handling numbers improves. By the time they are in the Foundation 2 class, they thoroughly enjoy working with numbers, but still need very practical experiences and a lot of support from the teacher. In an excellent practical activity, a group of reception children counted on to eight. They rolled the dice and had to add on a number in order to get more objects to build up their imaginary monster. The children needed a good deal of support, but the praise and encouragement from the teacher inspired them to try hard. Staff work very hard to extend children's language skills. However, this activity shows how limited the spoken vocabulary of the children is, as they try hard to respond to key questions asked by the teacher. In all the mathematical activities staff are very much aware of the need to give children plenty of experience in acquiring a new skill or a new understanding because the children find it difficult to remember new ideas for any length of time.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision for children's knowledge and understanding of the world is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff plan lively and interesting activities which capture children's imagination.
- Standards are higher in ICT than other aspects because of the very good quality practical experiences that staff provide and the very good quality equipment.
- Staff combine the outdoor and indoor learning very effectively to extend children's learning.

Commentary

43. Teaching and learning are very good and children thoroughly enjoy the range and variety of tasks that staff provide to extend their knowledge and skills. However, their very poor language skills on entry to the school reduce the rate of their achievement overall. Nevertheless, achievement is good and children are on track to reach standards that are well below expectations. Teachers

provide a very good range of lively, practical activities in both the indoor and outdoor areas. There is an excellent 'garden centre' in Foundation 1 where the children can pretend to buy and sell plants and where they learn about putting plants into compost and then taking care of them. In the Foundation 2 class, the children have dug for worms, examined them with a microscope and compared their different sizes. They use books to find different mini-beasts and the gymnasium has been turned into a jungle for the 'bug hunt'. All these rich experiences capture the imagination of the children and engross them in their learning. In both classes, children become increasingly confident in using different kinds of ICT. When using the listening centre, they are confident in changing the tapes, adjusting the volume and switching it on and off. Older children program the 'Roamer' confidently and estimate how far it will move forwards and backwards. The majority are familiar with using programs on the computer and are confident when using the mouse. A continual drawback to learning is the poor development of language which prevents the majority of children giving clear explanations of what they know and understand.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for physical development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff provide very good opportunities for children to develop physical skills in the gymnasium and hall.
- Children achieve very well through the very good quality tasks both in the classrooms and the outdoor areas.

Commentary

44. Teaching and learning are very good and children achieve very well. They are on track to be below expectations by the end of reception. Teaching and learning are very good and children respond very well to the wide range of experiences staff provide for them. The gymnasium and hall provide excellent facilities where children can learn to control their body movements and items of equipment. In the outside area, they learn to control pedal cycles and other wheeled items, they can climb, crawl and play games in safety and use items of equipment in an imaginative way. Throughout the Foundation classes, there are many carefully planned opportunities for children to learn how to manipulate small tools such as brushes, scissors, pencils and glue sticks. At the writing table, they pretend to write letters, lists and cards. In spite of this wealth of experience, many children leave the Foundation 2 class with poor control of small tools and equipment and this has a direct impact on their handwriting and presentation skills.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children enjoy and benefit from a very good range of creative experiences.

- The creative activities teachers provide link very well with other areas of learning.

Commentary

45. Teaching and learning are very good and children achieve very well in this area of learning. Staff create very effective opportunities for children to develop imaginative play. They love singing songs and accompany the songs with a wide range of percussion instruments. Staff provide high quality role play⁴ areas and children develop their skills of imaginative play very well. For example, in Foundation 1, the children bought plants from the garden centre using real money and this prepares them for their money activities in mathematics. The Foundation 2 children develop creative skills both indoors and outdoors. They paint in the classroom as well as in the outdoor area where they use large pieces of paper, big brushes and plenty of paint to create large paintings that hang on the perimeter fence. Staff link children's creative development very productively to other areas of their learning, particularly personal, social and emotional development. Staff use all the activities very well to engage children in playing with, or alongside, other children. The timely intervention by staff encourages them to share, co-operate with each other and gain in confidence to try new creative activities.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well across the school because of the very good teaching and learning.
- The TALK project is having a very positive effect on raising standards.
- The very high emphasis on reading has a significant impact on achievement.
- Pupils write confidently across a range of styles, but there is not enough emphasis on developing handwriting in the infant classes.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and use it very well to ensure very good learning.
- The very good leadership and management support staff very effectively.
- There is very good use of English in other subjects.

Commentary

46. Due to very good teaching and learning, pupils' achievement is consistently very good throughout the school. As a result, from very low standards on entry to school, pupils attain above average standards in national tests at the end of Year 6. When compared with similar schools, standards have been well above average for the last three years. All groups of pupils, including those with

⁴ A role play area is based on real life contexts, such as a garden centre, and ensures that children develop skills through taking different roles.

special educational needs and the small number with English as an additional language, do equally well. Observed standards are below average at the end of Year 2, but improving, and above average at the end of Year 6.

47. The introduction of the TALK project is having a very positive impact on both speaking and listening. By Year 2 standards are at the expected level in listening and by Year 6 standards are above the expected level, which is very good achievement. Although standards are currently below average in speaking in Year 2, pupils are gaining confidence and extending their vocabulary very well. All teachers make very effective use of partnered discussion to generate small group and class discussions. They take great care to evaluate and assess pupils' speaking skills and provide valuable feedback that enables pupils to improve. Pupils listen and respond very well in lessons and by Year 6 pupils speak with confidence across a range of different audiences at the expected level. Teachers match questions very well to pupils' different abilities and use them very effectively to check knowledge and understanding.
48. The provision for reading is excellent. The high quality and well-trained reading assistants employed in the afternoons support individual pupils extremely well. By Year 2, pupils are willing to have a go at reading unfamiliar words and thoroughly enjoy talking about the stories. Teachers build very well on these early skills as pupils move through the school. This ensures that, by Year 6, standards are above average. Staff use group reading very well in lessons. They use the assessment systems very well, ensuring that they analyse the information very carefully in order to set targets for improvement in all year groups.
49. There is very good provision for developing pupils' writing. By Year 2 standards are below average. Pupils write interesting and lively accounts, but they do not make effective use of their handwriting skills in all areas of writing. This limits their ability to write neatly and clearly. Progress and achievement speed up significantly as pupils move through Year 3. This ensures that, by Year 4, pupils' handwriting is well formed and easy to read. By Year 6, there is a very good range and quantity of writing by pupils of all abilities. Teachers' own use of good handwriting skills makes a strong impact on progress and achievement.
50. Teaching and learning throughout the school are overall very good. They have many excellent features and are consistent between classes and year groups. This makes a very positive contribution to pupils' achievement and attitudes. Pupils thoroughly enjoy their work in English because the teachers make it interesting and fun. Teachers increase pupils' enthusiasm by using drama to make lessons real. All teachers have a clear understanding of the subject and use this to very good effect in lessons. This ensures that all pupils behave very well and develop very positive attitudes to work and learning. All teachers share learning objectives with pupils and use them to focus their learning during and at the end of lessons. Very well structured lessons with very effective demonstrations of skills quickly move on to open-ended tasks where pupils apply the skills learned during the introduction. Teachers make very good use of instructions to develop pupils' thinking and encourage them to focus on their collaborative work with talking partners. In all lessons there is a very good

match of work to the abilities of all pupils. The very good provision for more able pupils includes clear extension tasks. There is systematic planning for pupils to use their ICT skills in lessons. This includes plenty of opportunities for pupils to use computers for drafting and redrafting. The quality and use of assessment information to improve pupils' learning are very good across the school. They ensure that all ages and abilities have a very good understanding of how to improve their work.

51. The very good leadership gives clear and very effective guidance to teachers and support assistants. There is outstandingly good teamwork which is supported by detailed and thorough monitoring of teaching and learning. The co-ordinator has a clear picture of the strengths and areas of need in English throughout the school. Her very good management ensures that all members of staff share ideas and good practice.
52. Improvement since the previous inspection is very good because of the improved teaching, achievement, reading standards, assessment, leadership and management.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

53. Pupils use their literacy skills very effectively in other subjects. There is very good promotion of speaking, listening and writing in history. Writing is also promoted well in science and design and technology when pupils write up their experiments and give clear instructions. There is a clear focus on developing pupils' technical vocabulary in subjects such as music and mathematics. This increases their understanding of the need to use language precisely. Pupils use books and the Internet to research information effectively across a range of subjects.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The organisation of pupils into ability groups ensures that pupils achieve very well.
- Teachers work very well with classroom assistants and use the very good assessment systems very well.
- The co-ordinator supports this subject well, particularly in analysing pupils' progress.

Commentary

54. Due to very good teaching and learning, standards are above average at the end of Year 6. This reflects pupils' excellent achievement over time from their very low starting points. When compared with similar schools, standards in the national tests in Year 6 have been well above average for the last four years. Although standards are below average at the end of Year 2, pupils do very well

to get where they are and achievement is also very good. All groups of pupils do equally well throughout the school.

55. Teachers build firm foundations in the infant classes for mathematical understanding and problem solving through a wealth of practical mathematical experiences. Pupils extend their use of numbers in Year 1 and begin to solve mathematical problems. In Year 2 pupils handle numbers confidently and enjoy handling shapes and measurements but fewer pupils reach the expected level than the national average. In the junior classes pupils continue to build their confidence in handling numbers and develop skills in handling other aspects of the mathematics curriculum. By Year 6 pupils tackle mathematical problems with confidence and make accurate calculations with fractions and decimals. The organisation of classes in ability classes is having a positive impact on pupils' performance. Good use of teacher expertise and shared planning ensures that work is very well matched to pupils' ability. Pupils with special educational needs, pupils with English as an additional language and looked after pupils achieve well.
56. Teaching and learning are consistently very good, with some excellent features. This results in very good achievement throughout the school. Teachers use assessment very effectively in lessons and provide positive and constructive feedback to pupils. As a result, high levels of interest and engagement are sustained. The use of the TALK project promotes collaborative work in mathematics throughout the school very well. Pupils support each other in their learning and interact well with partners and groups. This promotes self-assessment and encourages pupils to develop their understanding of mathematics. Teaching assistants make a significant contribution. In all lessons, individuals and groups of pupils are well supported and challenged to do their best. Assistants are confident in knowing and understanding the learning outcomes. They contribute to teaching by questioning, encouragement and teaching strategies to develop mental calculations. Staff have very high expectations of pupils' behaviour, which promote very positive attitudes to learning. A very strong feature in all lessons is the relationship between teachers, support staff and pupils. This team approach creates an ethos of success and enjoyment in lessons that maintains high levels of interest.
57. Leadership and management of mathematics are good. The co-ordinator monitors and evaluates teaching and learning effectively. The checking of performance data and looking at pupils' work provide an overview of standards. This helps teachers in their planning and leads to additional support for pupils. The co-ordinator delivers whole-school training that is followed by working alongside colleagues in classrooms. The impact of this professional development is having a positive effect on pupils' ability to use and apply mathematics. The subject leader is successful in building confidence and strengthening teamwork.
58. Improvement since the previous inspection is very good.

Mathematics across the curriculum

59. Teachers extend mathematics very effectively across the curriculum. A particular strength is the development of speaking and listening in lessons. Pattern work is used regularly in art and design and design and technology. The use of map work in geography is effective in developing an understanding of co-ordinates. Counting and clapping in music develop an understanding of algebra. Food technology linked to cultural development enables pupils to estimate and weigh ingredients. Cross-curricular links are planned for throughout the school and are effective in promoting pupils' use and application of their mathematical skills throughout the school.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The consistent systems set up in science ensure that pupils achieve very well.
- Pupils thoroughly enjoy this subject.
- Teachers make sure that lessons match pupils' different styles of learning.
- Assessment is well focused to individual pupils' needs.
- Staff cover the full curriculum very effectively, but miss some opportunities to extend ICT skills through this subject.
- The science co-ordinator monitors her subject systematically.

Commentary

60. Standards in the national tests fell in 2004 in Year 6 to average because there were more pupils with special educational needs than usual. Standards had been above average in previous years and the inspection judges standards as back to that level. Compared with similar schools, standards have been consistently well above average for the past four years. Pupils achieve very well in the infant classes because there is a strong emphasis on practical work. Pupils learn about key scientific principles, such as materials, by finding out how things work for themselves. This is particularly effective for pupils with special educational needs because they can take time to repeat key practical tasks. By Year 2 standards are at the expected level. Pupils understand the importance of healthy eating, enjoy explaining about changes in materials and understand why they have to check their predictions. The emphasis on scientific investigations continues in the junior classes. By Year 6, pupils have a very thorough understanding of the full science curriculum. They use technical scientific vocabulary with confidence and give a wide range of examples when explaining key scientific principles, such as the food chain.
61. Pupils are very enthusiastic about science because staff make lessons fun. The carefully planned curriculum ensures that pupils build steadily on previous learning. This gives them a great confidence in tackling new learning.
62. Teaching and learning are very good. Staff consider very carefully the different ways that pupils learn. They provide a wide range of strategies to match individual needs. The singing of key scientific principles at the end of blocks of work is particularly effective. The careful organisation of lessons results in a

very effective combination of whole-class discussion with group tasks. The use of the TALK project works very well indeed. Pupils expect to answer questions with their partners and this ensures that they tackle challenging questions by sharing each other's understanding. Teachers refer to the key learning at the beginning of lessons very consistently throughout the school. Pupils have great confidence in this system and expect to evaluate their learning as the lesson proceeds. Teachers manage behaviour extremely well and lessons are calm and productive occasions.

63. The formal assessment twice a year tracks pupils' progress very effectively. Teachers supplement this testing very well by identifying the learning carried out in each lesson. The simple coloured coding that teachers use is very efficient. Teachers make very good use of the assessment to plan lessons that match pupils' needs.
64. Teachers plan the curriculum very carefully over time to ensure that there is a balance across the different aspects of science. The organisation of blocks of time works very well and ensures that pupils have time to consolidate their new learning. Staff use equipment such as digital cameras well. However, they miss opportunities for pupils to use computers to record their findings in formats such as bar charts or spreadsheets or to use word processing to write about their investigations. Links with literacy are very good and with numeracy they are good.
65. Leadership and management are good. The co-ordinator has a good understanding of the provision throughout the school because she monitors pupils' learning regularly. She is enthusiastic and keen to develop her subject further. Improvement since the previous inspection is very good.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The regular use of the computer suite ensures that pupils achieve very well.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and use it very effectively to support each pupil.
- The school covers all the aspects of the ICT curriculum systematically, but misses opportunities to extend learning across some other subjects.
- The co-ordinator works well with the specialist from the Excellence in Cities (EiC) project.

Commentary

66. The school uses the computer suite very efficiently. Each pupil achieves very well because they have good opportunities to learn new skills and time to practise them straight away. Standards by Year 2 are above the expected level. These pupils have systematically developed their skills over time. They handle computers very confidently and use programs, such as branching databases, at a higher level than expected for their age. They produce imaginative graphics

with simple texts using a good range of different techniques. Standards by Year 6 are at the expected level. This is because these pupils have not benefited from using the computer suite throughout their primary schooling. Nevertheless, they work confidently on computers and enjoy developing their skills. They produce PowerPoint presentations with features such as hyperlinks to the Internet and buttons that link across different slides and they enjoy researching the Internet.

67. Teaching and learning are very good. The school has worked hard to extend staff's confidence in this subject. The regular staff development ensures a good level of subject knowledge. Staff use this well to make sure that pupils with special educational needs are able to handle the tasks at their own levels. Teachers organise pupils very carefully into partners and use the TALK project very effectively to provide high levels of discussion between pupils as they learn new skills. This is particularly helpful to the pupils with English as an additional language and the looked after pupils. They gain confidence through the very good communication with their own partners. Teachers are very good at outlining the learning to take place at the beginning of lessons. They check this regularly through the lessons and pupils have a very good understanding of the focus for their learning.
68. Termly planning is very well organised. This provides a very well balanced programme for pupils across the year. Year 6 pupils use the local City resource centre very well to provide challenging lessons for the older pupils. These pupils thoroughly enjoy the opportunities to use the more sophisticated equipment in this centre. The good quality assessment systems ensure that pupils' achievement builds steadily on previous learning.
69. Leadership and management are good. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and has a productive partnership with the specialist from the EiC project. Together they are extending the assessment system by introducing a very good quality system for pupils to record their own achievement. There has been very good improvement since the previous inspection, with higher standards and the teaching now of a better quality.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

70. This is satisfactory overall. There is some very good use of the computer suite across the curriculum. For example, in music teachers use the computerised programs very effectively to support pupils' development of composing skills. In Year 2 teachers make high quality links in science by using mini-beasts as the focus for producing branching databases. However, the use of ICT across the curriculum is not consistent throughout the school. Teachers are missing opportunities to use computers to extend learning of ICT in some subjects. This is particularly the case in mathematics and in recording numerical findings in science.

HUMANITIES

71. There was not sufficient time to collect enough evidence to support overall judgements about provision in **geography**. Scrutiny of planning and pupils' work showed that there is a lively and relevant curriculum in place and discussion with the co-ordinator confirmed this. The youngest pupils make very good use of the local environment, beginning their work on understanding maps by using the area around the school. As they grow older, they continue to learn through real experiences, using Marfleet Lane for a traffic survey and then discussing how improvements can be made. Teachers skilfully use current aspects of interest to broaden the pupils' knowledge and understanding. For instance, the south east Asian earthquake triggered work on what causes earthquakes to happen and where they are likely to occur around the world. It also provided a superb link with literacy as the pupils wrote about the death of an imaginary brother in the disaster. Pupils' work shows that there are many links with other areas of the curriculum. In the one geography lesson observed the pupils were studying the countries of Europe in preparation for a history lesson about World War 2. In the lesson, they showed how confident they were in using maps.

History

Provision in history is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well because of the very good teaching and the substantial amount of time allocated to each unit of study.
- Teachers use resources for teaching and learning very well.
- Powerful links are made with other areas of the curriculum.
- Leadership and management support the development of history very well.

Commentary

72. From a very low starting point pupils achieve very well and, by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, have reached standards that are in line with those expected for pupils of a similar age. The quality of teaching and learning is very good and as a result of this the pupils have a genuine enthusiasm for the subject. Introductions to lessons are lively and immediately engage the interest of the pupils, tasks are challenging but well matched to the abilities of all the pupils. Discussion is encouraged between the pupils and this helps them in their learning and provides an opportunity for them to order their thoughts before being asked to respond. Each unit of study is given a substantial block of time and this is helping the pupils to become very involved in their learning and gain in-depth knowledge of the different aspects of history.
73. Teaching and learning are very good. Teachers use resources very effectively, particularly the new 'smartboards' where staff project images relating to the topic and lead on to engage pupils in very interesting questions. The timely use of a whole range of resources, visits and visitors brings history to life and engages the interest of the pupils.

74. The school is totally committed to cross-curricular links and these are immensely strong and very effective in history. Every topic studied supports the pupils' work in literacy; lessons contain plenty of discussion, both with the teacher and with talking partners. Time is given for pupils to think through their answers so that they can respond with confidence. It is not surprising that pupils gain so much enjoyment from their learning when they can see so clearly its relevance and how it enhances so many different subjects.

75. The leadership and management of history and geography are very good. The co-ordinators have a very clear vision as to where the subjects are developing and the importance of maintaining and building cross-curricular links. Assessment procedures are good and include the scrutiny of pupils' workbooks and the monitoring of planning.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

There was not sufficient time to collect enough evidence to make an overall judgement about provision in art and design, design and technology, music or physical education.

76. Judgements in **art and design** are made on the basis of three lessons inspected and a scrutiny of pupils' work. In the lessons inspected teachers were enthusiastic about this subject and pupils enjoyed their work. Teachers work well in developing pupils' skills in handling three-dimensional work such as textiles and clay models. Partnership between classroom assistants and teachers is very good and ensures that pupils get plenty of practical support in lessons. The work of volunteer parents also supports pupils' individual development very effectively. Teachers display pupils' work sensitively and this celebrates achievement very well. There are very good links across the curriculum which extend pupils' learning well. This subject contributes to pupils' spiritual and cultural development very effectively.
77. Judgements in **design and technology** come from the inspection of one lesson and from looking at pupils' work, talking to pupils about aspects of their work and sampling curriculum enrichment activities like clubs, forming the basis of the commentary below. The curriculum is planned effectively to link with other subjects. Art and design is used well to add colour and decoration to finished products. In Years 4 and 5, chairs and musical instruments are finished off well using paint, pattern and sequins. Food technology is linked to healthy eating and the science of bread making in Year 2. Pupils' work shows that the stages of planning, working with materials and evaluating are incorporated well into the curriculum. The co-ordinator is effective in allocating time and resources to the subject. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very positive and the range of work on display shows pupils' individual ideas are developed well into a finished product.
78. Only three lessons were seen in **music** during the course of the inspection, together with the music in assemblies. However, a Year 6 lesson was inspected and it is possible to make a secure judgement about standards, which are well above the expected level. The lesson contained all the different key elements of this subject. Pupils clearly achieve well above average standards in their singing by Year 6. This is very good improvement from the satisfactory progress at the previous inspection. All pupils sang confidently in two-part harmony in the lesson seen and in assemblies. This is a clear result of the deputy headteacher's enthusiasm and subject knowledge. The very high level of achievement is apparent in pupils' composing and performing skills. They work with very high levels of interest and enthusiasm to compose words, rhythms and melodies to songs such as those from the Second World War. This makes a very positive contribution to pupils' knowledge and understanding of history. Lessons increase pupils' social skills because they work collaboratively to practise and improve their skills. Very good instrumental tuition, paid for by the school, makes very good provision for pupils with musical talents. The school makes very effective use of visiting musicians to increase pupils' skills and interest in music. This, and the regular musical performances

by pupils, increases their self-esteem and awareness of how well they can achieve.

79. Judgements in **physical education** are made from two lessons that were inspected, the scrutiny of planning and sampling curriculum enrichment activities like clubs. The curriculum covers all aspects of the subject and receives regular attention. In the lessons observed, pupils made good progress in dance and games. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and achievement is good. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good and are reflected in the level of support given to extra sport clubs and sport teams. The new co-ordinator is active in promoting team sport and this makes a significant contribution to social development and health education. The subject is well resourced and the extensive facilities are used well by the school and the community.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision in personal, social and health education and citizenship is **excellent**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is an extremely high priority for this aspect of the curriculum.
- Teachers organise their nurture lessons extremely carefully and pupils' learning is very good quality.
- Assemblies and the school council make excellent contributions to this aspect.

Commentary

80. The whole school greatly values this aspect of pupils' development. All staff provide excellent role models for pupils. They take time to talk to pupils individually and to listen carefully to their responses. The behaviour mentor plays a very important role in supporting pupils with more challenging personal needs. There is a clearly defined section of the science curriculum devoted to healthy eating. Pupils gain long-term understanding of the importance of eating appropriately through carrying out a range of different tasks such as making up a healthy pack. The school supports the LEA healthy school meals initiative very effectively and pupils are proud to identify why the meals are healthy.
81. Teaching and learning are very good. There is an excellent programme of twice-weekly lessons in place that systematically supports pupils in building up their skills. The teaching quality is very good and ensures that each pupil has a turn to contribute to the discussion. Teachers use very imaginative ideas to extend pupils' learning and they thoroughly enjoy the sessions. The combination of very good quality lessons and excellent opportunities for developing skills outside lessons ensures excellent achievement, particularly when the low levels on entry to the school are considered.
82. Leadership and management are excellent. The very good teaching and learning in lessons combine extremely well with the very high emphasis on these skills across the whole school day. The school organises a very high quality, systematic programme of work in assemblies to cover these aspects of

the curriculum. Staff leading the assemblies plan highly original ideas that capture pupils' attention and reinforce key messages very effectively. The school council gives pupils a very good understanding of citizenship and the councillors are extremely proud to make changes to the school environment on behalf of their fellow pupils.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement	Grade
The overall effectiveness of the school	2
How inclusive the school is	1
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	2
Overall standards achieved	2
Pupils' achievement	2
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)	2
Attendance	4
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	2
The quality of teaching	2
How well pupils learn	2
The quality of assessment	2
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	2
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	1
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	1
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2
<i>Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7).</i>	