

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ST JAMES C E JUNIOR SCHOOL**

Tunbridge Wells

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 118610

Headteacher: Paul Chandler

Lead inspector: Lesley P A Clark

Dates of inspection: 22<sup>nd</sup> - 25<sup>th</sup> May 2005

Inspection number: 267794

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school: Junior  
School category: Voluntary Controlled  
Age range of pupils: 7 – 11  
Gender of pupils: Mixed  
Number on roll: 270

School address: Sandrock Road  
Tunbridge Wells  
Kent  
Postcode: TN2 3PR

Telephone number: 01892 523006  
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Appropriate authority: Governing body  
Name of chair of governors: Dr John Pomeroy

Date of previous inspection: 12/07/1999

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

This is an average-sized junior school. No pupils are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. Nearly all pupils are of white ethnic backgrounds. The take-up of free school meals is very low. The school largely serves a socially and economically advantaged residential area, close to the town centre; about 15 per cent of pupils come from more deprived areas. Pupils' attainment on entry is above average. Forty-one pupils (15 per cent) are on the list of special educational needs, which is below average. Five pupils have statements of special educational needs, an above average proportion. Most of the pupils receiving additional help have moderate learning difficulties and some severe difficulties including social, emotional and behavioural problems, physical difficulties and autism. The number of pupils joining or leaving the school other than at the usual times is low. Since January 2005, there have been a number of supply teachers covering the deputy headteacher's class who is on long-term sick leave. The school was awarded its second Activemark Gold and third Investors in People in 2004 and the Artsmark Gold, for the first time, in 2005. The school plays a major leading role locally in curriculum development, leadership and pupil involvement in education, working with 23 schools in the local cluster and two universities. At present, the school is heavily over-subscribed in all year groups.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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34100	David Earley	Team inspector	Information and communication technology (ICT) Design and technology Physical education (PE)
10269	David Figures	Team inspector	English Geography History
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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**This is a very effective school** which provides a very good all-round education for its pupils, both academically and personally, leading to high standards. The leadership and management are very good and the school gives very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Academic standards which are well above average
- Pupils' very good attitudes to all aspects of school life and very good personal development
- Very good leadership, management and governance
- A very good curriculum with outstanding enrichment that caters very well for the individual pupil
- Excellent contribution to wider educational partnerships
- Very good care, advice, support and guidance for all pupils
- Too few opportunities for teachers to share very good and excellent practice within the school
- Not enough involvement of pupils in assessing their own work

Improvement is good since the last inspection in July 1999. Standards are higher overall across the subject range. The minor issues identified at the last inspection have been addressed and the school has continued to develop its curricular provision to ensure all pupils receive a balanced education. Apart from the very small classrooms for the large class sizes there are no barriers to learning; a significant aid is the pupils' energy and zest for learning.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*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.*

**Achievement is good;** that of pupils with special educational needs is very good. Standards in the current Year 6 are well above average overall in English, though higher in speaking, listening and reading than in writing. The school has taken effective steps to raise standards in writing, now above average, after the dip in the 2004 national tests. Standards are well above average in mathematics and science, continuing a well-established trend. Standards of the present group of pupils in Year 6 are well above average in ICT, religious education and PE. No judgements on standards in other subjects were made. The school is likely to meet its challenging targets for 2005.

**Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is very good.** Their attitudes and behaviour are also very good. Attendance is well above the national average and pupils arrive promptly to school.

### QUALITY OF EDUCATION

**The quality of education provided by the school is very good** and leads to well above average standards and good achievement. **The quality of teaching and learning is good.** It is satisfactory with some good features in Years 3 and 4 and almost invariably very good and sometimes excellent in Years 5 and 6. The quality of teaching and learning is good in most subjects with some very good teaching was seen in English and music and outstanding teaching and learning in

mathematics and swimming. Teaching assistants give very good support to pupils with special educational needs and consequently they make very good progress. In Years 3 and 4, pupils make slower progress in learning basic literacy skills because these are not taught systematically and they have too few opportunities to practise independently what they learn. A feature of the very good teaching is the imaginative approach and sense of fun with pupils participating to the full, often in a group. Learning is slower in those lessons where pupils sit and listen for lengthy periods of time. The skills of literacy and ICT are used very well across the curriculum; the skills of numeracy are used well. The assessment and recording of pupils' progress is good overall but pupils in several classes are not sufficiently involved in assessing their own work and so they tend to repeat the same basic mistakes. The curriculum is very good and enriched exceptionally well. Resources are good. Accommodation is satisfactory. The classrooms are very cramped for the large class sizes, reducing the range of styles of teaching for the teachers. Arrangements for ensuring pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are very good. The school provides pupils with very good support and guidance and involves them very well in its work and development. The partnership with parents is good and there are very good links with the local community and other schools.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management are very good.** The headteacher leads the school very well and he is ably assisted by the recently restructured management team. A feature of the very good leadership of this school is the excellent lead given within the local community of schools and universities to aspects of curriculum development, school leadership and pupil involvement in education. Subject coordinators fulfil their roles well. The school is very well managed and runs very efficiently. Governance is very good and ensures that all statutory requirements are met.

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

Parents think this is a very good school; they would like more opportunities to join in and help. Pupils think this is a really good school and they love playtimes, afternoons and all the extra-curricular activities.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Make opportunities for teachers to share very good and excellent practice within the school
- Find ways to involve pupils in assessing their own work so they learn from their mistakes

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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

#### **Standards achieved in subjects**

Pupils' standards are well above average and they achieve well.

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

- Standards are well above average in mathematics, science, religious education and ICT
- Standards are well above average in English, though better in speaking and listening and reading than writing, where the development of basic literacy skills is slower than it should be
- Standards are well above average in physical education: they are outstanding in swimming

#### **Commentary**

1. For at least the last five years, pupils' test results at the end of Year 6 in mathematics and science have been consistently well above average: in each subject, pupils have been about two terms ahead of pupils generally. Results in mathematics when compared over a similar period with those of schools in similar circumstances have been consistently high; in science the record is not quite so consistent though generally above average. English proved an exception in 2004 when test results - at average - were uncharacteristically low and well below the average for similar schools. This was because, although the proportion of pupils scoring at the level expected of eleven-year-olds was high, the proportion scoring above that was well below the national average, particularly in writing. The school's painstaking and detailed analysis of the pupils' scripts has identified reasons for this and the measures adopted in response put the school in a good position to do better in subsequent years.

2. The standards of work seen of the present Year 6 in mathematics were consistent with above-average results in the end of year tests and pupils of all levels of ability are achieving well. There are several reasons for this. First, the pupils are taught in sets according to their current attainment: the school is good at knowing what the individual pupil needs and providing it. Teaching, good overall, is particularly strong with the middle mathematics groups so that these pupils are helped to make the most of their abilities. Pupils in the lower groups, including those with special educational needs who achieve very well, are particularly well supported, and a fluid organisation allows pupils to join them for extra help when needed, returning to another group when the difficulty is overcome. The work seen in science was also consistent with test results which are well above-average. Pupils learn well through investigation, their work is rigorously assessed at the end of each unit and they achieve well, building up a strong knowledge base in the subject.

3. A significant factor in the improvement in standards in ICT since the previous inspection has been the provision of a computer suite which enables whole class lessons to be taught. This is further enhanced by the wide range of software available for use and by the computers and other equipment available in classrooms. The school runs a computer club which successfully develops pupils' interests and extends their skills and many pupils use computers at home. The very good standards in religious education stem from a good curriculum and strong leadership which promotes good achievement. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a mature understanding of the subject, particularly that aspect of it which asks pupils to respond to what they have learned about religion. Standards are very high in PE and outstanding in swimming, where high quality coaching ensures pupils make rapid progress.

4. Pupils speak very well: those in Year 6 are thoughtful and articulate, engaging maturely in discussion with others. Their standards of reading are well above average, the highest attainers reading widely and perceptively. Standards of writing are above average, much better than those indicated by the 2004 results, and pupils achieve well in Years 5 and 6. The relatively lower writing

results are due in part because the technical aspects of writing such as spelling, punctuation and handwriting are not as well grounded in Years 3 and 4 as they should be. Some pupils who have good ideas find it difficult to express them on paper because their basic literacy skills are not well enough established to do so.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.6 (28.7)	26.9 (26.8)
Mathematics	29.6 (29.5)	26.9 (26.8)
Science	30.2 (30.7)	28.6 (28.6)

*There were 67 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

**Pupils’ attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)**

Pupils’ attitudes and behaviour are very good. Their personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also very good. Attendance is well above average and pupils arrive punctually.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils are very well motivated to learn and take a high degree of interest in school life and all it offers
- Pupils behave very well, especially when working on their own, with a partner or in groups
- Relationships are very good and pupils treat each other with courtesy and respect
- The school promotes pupils’ personal, spiritual, moral and social understanding very well
- Very good attendance aids pupils’ good achievement

**Commentary**

5. Pupils’ enthusiasm for learning contributes significantly to their good achievement and the high standards they attain. Pupils say they like learning because they ‘learn in a fun way’ and their ‘teachers make the lessons interesting’. In a general discussion, pupils talked willingly and readily about their favourite subjects and agreed that they liked lessons where they had to think and work things out for themselves. Pupils develop a great deal of self-confidence through performing and speaking in front of their classmates in lessons and in assemblies. This is a school in which pupils clearly feel they have a stake: they venture their opinions confidently and with a positive slant. They are proud of their school and point out good features in the work done by others. The atmosphere in classrooms is happy and relaxed and the buzz emanating from the open-plan rooms is usually purposeful and hard-working. The very high attendance at the wide range of extra-curricular activities illustrates pupils’ enthusiasm for school. Pupils are open, cheerful and friendly and their individuality is fostered very effectively. Those with special gifts or talents are given good opportunities to shine. They like the social side of school. The majority prefer working in groups to working on their own and they really enjoy playtimes because then they can play with their friends. Many say this school is very special because of all the opportunities it offers them. A Year 6 pupil commented: ‘I am surprised how very quickly the four years have passed.’

6. Pupils behave very well. Older pupils work intently and industriously on their own, in pairs or in groups. They have high levels of concentration and behave sensibly and show much maturity in their dealings with others. Younger pupils also have good levels of concentration and are eager to learn. On occasions, younger pupils can become restless when they have to sit and listen for too long a time at a stretch; their inattention, however, quickly dispels when they are given a specific task or are asked to work with a partner and they clearly enjoy practical lessons when they can talk and move around. Pupils with behaviour difficulties are given very effective support by teaching assistants to help them to focus on their work and achieve well.

7. This is a school where children matter and where their views are taken into account. Pupils consider the school council to be very important because through this medium they can make their views known; as pupils in Year 5 explained, 'it gets things done that the children want'. One concern some pupils had, for example, was that lunchtime play was a bit rough for some people and so the school introduced a highly successful system of mentoring whereby Year 6 pupils mentor those in Year 3. Some of these friendships persist for the whole year. Younger pupils were sufficiently confident to suggest, for instance, that they would like to make a presentation in assembly to their mentors for their kindness to them when they started school. Older pupils enjoy their teachers' challenges and teasing sense of humour. They regularly check the school website to keep up with the latest, usually humorous, interactive game posted there by the ICT coordinator and many enter the weekly competition to identify an object photographed at a cunningly obscure angle in the hopes of winning the prize.

8. Pupils understand their responsibilities and what is expected of them very well. They have opportunities for reflection both in lessons and in assemblies and their sensitivity and responsiveness to music and to language often reveals insights beyond their years. Moral development is also promoted very well; for example, in discussions about 'fruits of the spirit' when the importance of patience and self-control were considered. The school rules, which promote very good behaviour, are reflected in pupils' very good moral attitudes. The school makes good provision for pupils' cultural development. For example, Islamic patterns and Hebrew writing are studied in religious education and Chinese writing in mathematics and there is a strong tradition of dance in the school. Very productive links with the local Romany community and their art work as well as art from a wide range of different cultures have helped to broaden pupils' cultural awareness.

9. The school and parents work well together to encourage regular attendance and punctuality. This results in very high attendance levels and makes a significant contribution to pupils' achievement.

## Attendance

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.3	School data	0.0
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

## Exclusions

There has been one, fixed-term exclusion in the present year, an unusual and isolated occurrence.

### *Ethnic background of pupils*

### *Exclusions in the last school year*

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	270	1	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 provided by the school is very good. The quality of teaching and learning is good, overall. Assessment is good. The curriculum is very good and its enrichment is outstanding. Standards of care, welfare, health and safety are very good. Pupils' views are sought and acted upon very well. Partnerships with parents are good and there are very good links with other schools and the local community and excellent contributions to wider partnerships.

### Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall as is assessment.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good in most subjects, very good in mathematics and outstanding in swimming
- The quality of teaching and learning is better in Years 5 and 6 than it is in Years 3 and 4
- Cramped classrooms inhibit the range of teaching styles available to teachers
- Teaching assistants are used very effectively to give additional help to pupils with special needs
- While overall assessment is good and largely effective, pupils are not sufficiently involved in all classes or subjects in assessing their own work

### Commentary

10. Teaching and learning continue to be predominantly good, as in the last inspection, with a large proportion being very good or excellent. Teaching quality ranges from satisfactory to excellent with most of the very good and excellent teaching in Years 5 and 6 and the satisfactory and good teaching in Years 3 and 4.

#### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 28 lessons*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	10	12	4	0	0	0

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

11. There are significant strengths in the teaching experienced by pupils in Years 5 and 6, the principal one of which is very good organisation so that with apparently minimal teacher-direction pupils work independently and effectively on their own or in groups at challenging but intensely interesting and often imaginatively conceived tasks. The timing of these lessons is very well judged. Demonstrations are short and effective and the work very well thought out to tax the different ability groups within the class or set. Pupils have opportunities to discuss, volunteer opinions and to ask questions as well as periods of quiet in which they knuckle down quickly because they know they have only a limited period of time in which to complete their work. The sequence of activities helps to maintain their interest as well as allowing teachers time to give intensive coaching to ensure that the points made are fully understood. As a result, lessons move at a fast pace, pupils are energetically involved and a zest for learning is engendered through support, praise and success. In excellent lessons, as in mathematics for instance, there was an excited buzz in the air as pupils worked together, checking and evaluating their work, stimulated through discussion to explain what they were learning and thirsting for more.

12. The overall good teaching in Years 3 and 4 is counterbalanced by that which is satisfactory in which there are some significant weaknesses that contribute to a generally slower pace of learning. Pupils spend long spells in 'listening mode', often as much as half an hour, resulting in increasing inattention and quite a lot of fidgeting. Questioning covers a limited range of functions, requiring a 'yes/no' answer or relying on what pupils offer rather than forming part of a positive

teaching strategy. While the teaching therefore is often lively, pupils' learning is much more passive. The weaknesses are most apparent in the teaching of basic literacy skills because the basics of punctuation, spelling and sentence construction are not covered each day in short bursts so that pupils learn through frequent repetition, reinforcement and review as they do successfully, for example, in mental and oral mathematics each day to reinforce their numeracy skills. Strengths include clear demonstrations in which teachers model what is expected of the pupils and a lively sense of fun which makes pupils laugh. However, opportunities are missed to develop high standards through involving pupils to demonstrate to others. Teaching is at its best in these year groups in subjects which have a strong practical element because pupils are then fully engaged in activities which the teacher has successfully set up so that pupils learn through full participation, almost unconsciously developing their skills.

13. It is undoubtedly true that the cramped classrooms for the large class sizes place restrictions on the range of teaching styles available to teachers. It is impossible to gather the class close together to engage in discussion or share a story, for example, and unless the tables are organised into groups it is very difficult for pupils to work together. In Years 3 and 4, therefore, pupils usually work with a partner to minimise disruption and to ensure that during whole-class teaching session all eyes are on the teacher. In Years 5 and 6, with pupils' greater maturity, working in groups and turning to the teacher when their attention is required works better. Teachers take every opportunity to use the next door classroom if it has been vacated and the extra space benefits pupils' learning, particularly in practical subjects such as art or science.

14. Pupils with special educational needs or with learning difficulties learn well because they are given very effective help from teaching assistants. Individual education plans are used as an effective prompt alongside lesson plans to enable assistants to develop essential skills and promote effective learning. As a result, pupils are fully included in lessons and make very good progress, many of them attaining nationally expected standards by the end of Year 6.

15. The school has good systems overall to assess pupils' work and this gives both teachers and subject coordinators a good overview of learning. Appropriate targets are set in English and mathematics and in some classes and subjects pupils share in evaluating their work. The next step, recognised by the school, is to involve pupils fully in self-assessment, checking what they have learnt against what they need to know and thus becoming more self-critical and learning from their mistakes. With the present system of marking, particularly with younger pupils, many repeat the same basic mistakes because they have no responsibility for checking their work.

## **The Curriculum**

The school provides a very well planned curriculum with a very rich and balanced programme of experiences which enable most pupils to attain high standards. Resources are good. Accommodation is satisfactory.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The curriculum is enriched exceptionally well
- The school is very committed to providing equality of opportunity for all pupils
- The curriculum is very broad with many subjects linked closely together in order to give coherence to learning
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good
- The good match of teachers and teaching assistants to the curriculum helps pupils to achieve well

## **Commentary**

16. The school ensures that pupils enjoy an extremely wide range of learning opportunities in order to enrich and extend their learning. The school's provision for the arts and sport is very well

balanced with the more academic activities, providing a very well rounded curriculum. Pupils in all classes receive instruction in swimming from highly experienced teachers and instructors and older pupils learn French. In events such as the arts day, school drama productions and in programmes such as, the 'Gypsy Project' and 'Roman Experience' pupils develop a very wide range of skills from across the curriculum. This helps to raise standards because pupils enjoy their work and at the same time are challenged to extend their skills. In a similar way pupils combine their knowledge and skills from such subjects as art, design technology, literacy, music and dance when they apply them to topics on Tudors or the 'Tunbridge Wells Experience.' Because these activities are very well planned there is a coherence to learning and pupils see a purpose to their work.

17. Extra curricular provision to support and extend learning is excellent. This includes a very wide range of sporting opportunities (football and netball throughout the year and seasonally: athletics, distance running, cricket, rugby and multi-sports skills development); many music clubs (three recorder groups, two choirs and an orchestra); and clubs involving such activities as dance, chess, weather forecasting, design technology and computers. There are also extra classes in mathematics and English to extend pupils' skills. Large numbers of pupils participate in these clubs. Pupils have many opportunities to make visits out of school in order to deepen and widen their experiences. Residential visits involve pupils in outdoor adventure activities and there they learn skills of teamwork and living together. Further enrichment is provided by the large variety of visitors who are welcomed to the school. These include authors, poets, local clergy who take the lead in worship, and clergy from different denominations and religions, the police, sports coaches and first aid trainers.

18. The school is very successful in ensuring that all pupils, whatever their abilities have equal access to the curriculum and opportunity to succeed. Older pupils are taught in classes according to ability in mathematics and sessions are organised to extend the writing skills of older more able pupils. Gifted and talented pupils are identified and provided with challenging tasks. The school has provided sports coaches, a chess coach and an orchestra leader in order to extend skills in these areas. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and at times outstanding. The curriculum is supplemented very well by extra-curricular activities for these pupils. For example, activities are provided for those with physical needs. Individual programmes are worked at in the gym club held before school on three mornings a week and in a further early-morning session where these pupils improve their manipulative skills. Mathematics sessions are run in the ICT suite before school and at lunch times for those who need extra help with their mathematics. Similar programmes are run which support spelling. Individual programmes are also organised for those who are gifted in mathematics and music.

19. The school makes effective use of the experience and skills of its teachers and teaching assistants particularly in such subjects as physical education, ICT and music. This is enhanced by the use of specialist teachers in physical education and coaches from local sporting organisations and clubs. This helps to raise standards. Teaching assistants are well used in supporting pupils with special educational needs. The school is generally well resourced so that teachers and pupils have ready access to all they need to support learning. The performing arts room, library and extensive outdoor areas provide further opportunities to extend the rich and varied curriculum. However, the open-plan classrooms are very small so that space is limited, particularly for practical activities, and, because there are no cloakrooms, coats and PE equipment encroach on space that could be used for learning.

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

The school gives its pupils very good support, advice and guidance based on its monitoring of them. The school ensures the care, welfare, health and safety of its pupils very well. The school seeks, values and acts on pupils' views very well.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The pupils' mentoring system works extremely well

- Pupils are cared for very well
- Pupils' targets are appropriate and based on careful monitoring

### **Commentary**

20. The school has very good systems in place to care for and guide its pupils. The mentoring system is an outstanding feature. A large number of pupils in Year 5 receive training in mentoring and are then appointed as mentors in Year 6. They are trained to listen to and befriend those who need more support. They meet regularly with school staff and are very good at their jobs. Their effectiveness is evaluated by a group of Year 5 pupils. The mentoring scheme helps new pupils to settle quickly to life in school, fosters responsibility and self esteem. As a result pupils have respect for each other and care for each other very well.

21. All staff have received child protection training, risk assessments are thorough and health and safety procedures followed. Teachers know their pupils very well and relationships between all in the school are very good. As a result pupils are cared for very well.

22. Pupils in all years are set academic targets. As pupils get older targets become more focussed and pertinent to their needs. As a result all pupils achieve well academically. The school is aware of pupils' personal development needs and carefully targets its support at those who need it most. The special educational needs coordinator has a key role in this: her remit is wider than only those pupils on the school's register of special educational need.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school's work within the Network Learning Community is excellent
- Parents receive very good information about the school's work
- Transfer arrangements to pupils' secondary schools work very well
- Links with the local church to enrich the curriculum are very good

### **Commentary**

23. The school is the lead school within the local network learning community. There are 23 primary, secondary and special schools involved in planning and executing relevant training and sharing good practice. For example, the work of special schools within the partnership has been valuable in helping others to cater for the needs of pupils with special needs in mainstream schools. All activities are formally evaluated annually. Canterbury Christ Church University College has been commissioned to evaluate the effectiveness of the community's work in terms of its impact on learning. The results of the study were very positive and included development points to help the learning community to become even more effective. This is an excellent feature of the school's links with wider partnerships.

24. Parents receive very good information, formally and informally, about the work of the school and its relevance to their children. In Years 3 and 4, pupils' home-school diaries are used as a method of daily communication between parents and teachers. In Years 5 and 6 these become used as homework diaries to encourage pupils to become more independent and prepare them for life in secondary school. There are regular newsletters and parents' meetings and the staff are always prepared to discuss issues with parents. Parents have confidence in the management of the school to resolve any issues they raise and as a result parents are very supportive of the school. The school does not make enough use of the expertise of parents to help pupils in classrooms, but it has recognised this and has plans in place to improve matters.

25. Pupils transfer to a large number of different secondary schools, but as a result of the school's careful planning pupils are prepared very well for life in their chosen school. Pupils create an A5 size 'Passport' in Year 6 which contains useful information about themselves and their expectations and allows the teachers at their new schools to get to know them quickly. Pupils undertake a taster day as well as participating in other joint events and projects designed to make their transition as smooth as possible.

26. The local church is very supportive of the school, and the school appreciates their support. The resources of the church enrich very much the curriculum available to pupils, particularly in religious education and history.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership and management are very good. The headteacher provides very good educational direction, ably supported by the management team. Management and governance are also very good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Very good leadership by the headteacher has ensured good improvement since the last inspection and continuing high standards
- The school's self-evaluation is very good and reflects the excellent lead given by the school in exploring broader issues within the wider education community
- The governing body offers high levels of challenge as well as support
- Financial management is very good

### **Commentary**

27. The headteacher's drive for high standards is equally matched by his concern for pupils' personal achievements and successes. Leadership is dynamic and high-powered but tempered by consideration for the well-being of individuals. Pupils with special educational needs bring the headteacher pieces of work where they have achieved well or pop into his room to tell him something; they are received warmly and gently affirmed. Individual needs are discreetly catered for, giving space for gifted and talented musicians, for example, to practise their instruments in school or for those who need extra help to overcome physical difficulties. Pupils know that they matter and this gives them confidence and a strong sense of their own worth. Academic standards are high but equally importantly so is pupils' personal development.

28. The school's vision for the future is very clear and revolves round issues in school and those reaching out into the wider educational sphere. Self-evaluation is accurate and indicates a shrewd assessment of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Monitoring of lessons is stringent and key coordinators are closely involved. The school improvement plan sets out clearly what the school wants to achieve next. All decisions are made after thorough research and discussion, often sparked by debates outside school. These then have an impact on school issues with the result that any changes that are made arise from well thought out policies rather than reactions to current educational ideas. Changes in policy are informed by a process of intellectual debate so that staff are fully involved in decision-making. The advantage of this process can be seen in the continuing high standards; a drawback is that the pace of change can be slow.

29. The headteacher is at the forefront of local initiatives to develop the curriculum, leadership skills and pupil involvement in education in his role as chair of the network of local schools and universities. This is reflected in his strong direction of developments in school. The restructured management team – set up as an interim measure during the long-term sick leave of the deputy head – has risen to the challenge of supporting and delivering change, most notably this year to raise standards in writing. Their leadership skills are being very well developed through looking at the work done in other schools to observe the different ways in which pupils learn and then

presenting their findings to the staff team and governors. The members of the senior management team are very knowledgeable about their subjects and their very good and excellent practice in the classroom should be used more extensively to guide others. The school's curriculum also reflects the influence of this wider educational involvement: subjects are linked creatively and the extended range of subjects provided outside the school day is outstanding. Older pupils are very aware of their contributions to the wider school community and welcome their increasing participation in monitoring their own learning; this has yet to be extended to all classes.

30. Subject coordinators as a whole provide good leadership and management and most have very good ideas as to how to develop their subjects further. Performance management is used effectively to develop teaching and learning. The management of teachers' time so they have allocated periods for planning, preparation and assessment is proving effective with high standards continuing in games lessons, now largely taken by sports coaches. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very well led and managed. The roles and responsibilities of staff, including teaching assistants, have been clearly defined and together they offer a wide range of expertise. The governor with responsibility for special educational needs is also fully involved.

31. The governing body is very well informed and takes a keen interest in all that goes on in school. Governors play a full part in helping to shape the school's educational direction, using their various talents and skills collectively for the benefit of the school. Individual governors visit regularly, report their findings to the main governing body and liaise closely with the subject coordinators to whom they have been assigned. The performance and strategy committee – made up of the chairs of the other individual committees – plays a key role in providing a strategic overview thus helping the governing body to be corporate and effective and to have a clear focus on improvement through question and debate. The governors are well aware of the standing of the school with regard to local education authority ratings and nationally. They are pleased with the school's continuing popularity and over-subscription but acutely aware of the limitations of the building and the restrictions it imposes on some teaching styles.

32. Financial management is very good and the school's small income per pupil is used very well for maximum educational benefit at the lowest possible cost. Aside from the small classrooms, there are no real barriers to learning; a significant aid is the pupils' thirst for learning and delight in all the school has to offer.

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	763594
Total expenditure	733769
Expenditure per pupil	2697

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	27550
Balance carried forward to the next	29824

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

### **SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 2**

#### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **good**

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

- Speaking and listening and reading standards are well above average
- Pupils leave the school enthusiastic about writing and reading
- Technical aspects of writing are not well enough established in Years 3 and 4
- The quality of teaching is good: it is better in Years 5 and 6 than in Years 3 and 4

#### **Commentary**

33. The school has a consistent record of good and very good results in the national tests for English extending over a number of years with, typically, both boys and girls leaving Year 6 about two terms ahead of pupils generally. The results have also been above the average of pupils in schools in similar circumstances. The pupils' performance in 2004 – average in national terms and well below the average of similar schools – thus did not follow the trend of previous years. The principal features of these results were that, while the proportion of pupils obtaining results in line with those expected of pupils at the end of Year 6 was high, the proportion of pupils doing better than this was about half the national average; and that the writing results were low.

34. The standards of the work seen were well above average, though better in reading and speaking and listening than in writing, and pupils of different levels of ability are achieving well. Pupils speak thoughtfully, are very articulate and express well-supported opinions. A group of Year 6 pupils, for instance, spoke cogently and maturely about the experience of writing, about work in history and geography, about life at school and their expectations of their new schools. Year 5 pupils are confident, articulate and draw on a wide vocabulary to express ideas. In a lesson on advertising, for instance, they debated with each other maturely, like eleven-year olds, their animated discussions contributing well to the pace at which they learned.

35. Similarly, pupils are confident and very competent readers, who enjoy reading and discuss what they have read with zest. One girl was clear that she chose 'unhappy' stories because happy stories are 'too predictable'. A boy conducted a sophisticated discussion about genres in literature, about the use of animals to display character, and about the battle between good and evil portrayed in many books.

36. Pupils also write well, the best with a confident, fluent style and an enterprising choice of words. Night is 'A fox scuttering the leaves'. In a fairy story: 'There was a puff of glittering smoke and Augustus turned into a handsome prince with beautiful, intelligent hazel eyes and dark brown hair.' When they talk about what they have written, higher attaining pupils show they are clearly fired up by the experience and describe lovingly how they came to compose. In one instance it was a poem, in another a modern fairy story and in a third a playscript. They are very proud of their achievement and keen to share it with others.

37. Where writing is less successful among the middle and lower attainers, though rarely less than satisfactory in standard, it is because sentence structure and vocabulary is not adventurous enough, or because pupils find it difficult to write to the topic given, or make too many spelling mistakes. The overall standard of the writing seen at the end of Year 6 is therefore nearer to above average than well above average.

38. The reason for this largely lies in the speed and certainty with which pupils establish and consolidate basic literacy skills in Years 3 and 4. For example, while the highest attaining Year 3 pupils write with interest and not a little humour ('Recipe for making parents shout - smashing a window with a ball') the work of some is marred by technical inaccuracies. For many in the middle and lower attaining groups, shortcomings in aspects of writing such as spelling, punctuation and handwriting stand in the way of pupils expressing their ideas effectively on paper.

39. The quality of teaching, good overall, is strongest in Years 5 and 6, a fact confirmed by the school's own tracking information which shows pupils making more progress in these classes than in Years 3 and 4. The teaching experienced by the younger pupils, while never less than satisfactory, has weaknesses which contribute to the slower pace of learning. For example, pupils are expected to listen to the teacher for long periods, sometimes as much as half an hour, and signs of inattention become evident. Questions are not always well targeted and teachers tend to accept answers from those offered by more confident pupils, while wider functions of questioning – for example, to prompt, probe, stimulate, assess; to challenge pupils of different abilities at their own level, to give opportunities for pupils to practise speaking or oblige them to refine their thinking – are not always well exploited.

40. The very good quality of teaching in Years 5 and 6 helps pupils make rapid progress. In Year 5, for example, lessons are tightly organised, with clearly set time frames so that pupils cover much work in a short time; and well judged questions direct the pupils' attention to particular aspects of the topic. The teacher has a minimal overt presence but is all the time discreetly directing the pupils' effective learning. A very good Year 6 lesson in which pupils wrote a poem personifying 'night', succeeded because of the thoughtful and varied approach of the teacher who gently drew the pupils, twelve girls and twenty boys, into writing accurate and sensitively worded poems.

41. The subject has maintained the position reported by the last inspection and is well led and managed by a knowledgeable coordinator. The coordinator's careful analysis of the results and of the pupils' scripts from 2004 has pinpointed the reasons for the unexpectedly low results and has put the school in a good position to do better in the future.

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

42. The mutual support of English and other subjects is very good. In the Year 5 and Year 6 geography and history project folders the English aspect of the work is taken very seriously and pupils display much skill in different styles of writing. Science records are well written: they are accurate, neat and make good use of scientific language. Preparing them makes a good contribution to pupils' literacy skills.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision for mathematics is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve well because the school is good at recognising what the individual pupil needs and providing it.
- The system of setting according to ability is flexible and pupils move from one group to another, depending on their current needs.
- The quality of teaching and learning is very good overall with some very good and excellent teaching in Years 5 and 6.
- Pupils have limited opportunities to assess their own learning
- The coordinator leads the subject very well and has a clear view of the way pupils learn.

## **Commentary**

43. Standards in the present Year 6 are well above average, continuing a well-established trend of at least five years' duration of well above average performance in national tests. Results in mathematics when compared with those of schools in similar circumstances have been consistently high over a similar period of time. Pupils of all levels of ability are achieving well. Improvement has been good since the last inspection, with a much stronger focus on mental and oral mathematics, helping the school to sustain the high standards.

44. In each year group, pupils are taught in sets according to their attainment. The type of teaching given in each set is distinct and has been well thought out to help pupils to learn in the best possible way. The lower groups, which are very small, have lots of opportunities for individual practice. Pupils in these groups are very well supported and the clear teaching breaks down new learning into one step at a time so as to ensure that pupils have understood. Those with special educational needs, included in these groups, achieve very well and most attain nationally expected standards at the end of Year 6. A flexible organisation allows pupils to join these groups for extra help when needed, returning to another group when the difficulty is overcome. Teaching is very strong in the middle mathematics groups so that these pupils are helped to make the most of their abilities. The planning ensures that there is time to practise and consolidate new skills. A good proportion of pupils go on to exceed national expectations as a result. Pupils in the top sets, including those with special gifts or talents, also achieve well because the teaching fuels their eager absorption of new concepts and does not dampen their enthusiasm by needless repetition. Their pace of learning therefore is fast and matches the speed of their grasp of new ideas. The school works hard to raise the standards of those who are performing at just below average levels. Good use is made of a mathematics club, held before school and in lunch hours, to give additional practice to these pupils using ICT to work through a commercial program at their own pace.

45. Features of the good teaching include: good organisation, an appropriate balance of teacher-led demonstrations and pupils' practice. Questioning is good and teachers' enthusiasm keeps pupils feeling buoyant. Where the quality of teaching is very good, lessons are very well ordered, requiring pupils to think logically and to order their thoughts. Teachers are quick to assess when a new concept is unclear and take time to go over it, skilfully finding different ways to clarify what they mean. In an excellent lesson, there was an excited buzz in the air. Excellent relationships with the pupils enabled the teacher to really push them to think and the very good pace of the lesson swept the pupils along with it. At the same time, the teacher's quickness to identify those who were getting lost meant they received intensive coaching and support when they needed it. Pupils in Year 6 are very aware of how they are learning and in discussion talked about the advantages and disadvantages of working out a puzzle systematically. It is a measure of the teaching's success that they agreed that the logical systematic approach was foolproof.

46. Training is very effective, involving teaching assistants as well as teaching staff. The school keeps abreast of new developments and constantly tweaks the way mathematics is taught. Elements of the national numeracy strategy have been incorporated into the teaching and are used successfully to inject pace and variety into lessons. The coordinator regularly checks and evaluates the effectiveness of the way mathematics is taught and her expert practical advice and enthusiasm are major contributory factors to the high standards pupils attain. Marking is good and teachers make constructive comments. A next stage, recognised by the school, is to include pupils more in assessing their own progress towards specific targets.

## **Mathematics across the curriculum**

47. Mathematics is used well in other subjects and opportunities are taken in geography, for example, and in science where tables are used to record results. Links with ICT are strong and the school's webpage encourages pupils to use the Internet to solve mathematical problems.

## SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above average in the present Year 6 and similar to those reported in the last inspection.
- Pupils are well taught and learn effectively through finding things out for themselves.
- While assessment of what pupils have learnt is scrupulous, pupils are not as involved as they should be in evaluating their own progress.

### Commentary

48. Standards have been consistently well above average for the last three years and at least above average before then but there is some variation compared to similar schools depending on the proportion of pupils who exceed the nationally expected level. Pupils achieve well. The school is ambitious and is currently aiming for 70 per cent to exceed the level expected by the end of Year 6. The headteacher has taken on responsibility for the subject during the coordinator's long-term sick leave. It is a measure of previously very good leadership and management that there is little to do at present except to set the goal for even higher standards through involving pupils in evaluating their learning.

49. Pupils enjoy science and many say it is one of their favourite subjects. achievement is good. A group of pupils from Years 5 and 6 talked with great enthusiasm about some investigations they had carried out that clearly fascinated them, describing, for example, a blend of cornflour and water that oscillated between liquid and solid depending on the pressure exerted upon it. Their use of technical language is very good and a clear factor in their high attainment; for example, average and higher attainers talked about molecular distribution when explaining the differences between two substances. In Year 4, there was a noticeable upsurge of interest when pupils switched to the practical activity and they worked with terrific energy with a partner, organising themselves well so that one noted down the results while the other carefully measured out different substances to dissolve in cold water. Pupils did not seem unduly worried by the tight space in the small classroom and carefully negotiated moving from the tables to the sink as required, though the potential for spillage was enormous.

50. The quality of teaching seen was good overall. Scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that it is very good in Years 5 and 6. Satisfactory lessons did not quite get the balance right in terms of teachers' explanations and pupils' tasks – there was a lot of fidgeting while pupils half-listened to what they had to do, in part because this repeated what they had covered already in a previous lesson. Younger pupils work well with a partner but this restricts learning from a mix of people in a larger group and being stimulated by a range of ideas. Older pupils clearly benefit from working together and the good teaching enables them to work with a high degree of independence. This is reflected in pupils' writing up of investigations: these are individual and often presented in a visually memorable way. Their lively illustrations, for example, demonstrate a very good understanding of the changing states of water, sometimes with humorous touches. Marking is scrupulous in Years 5 and 6 and every small mistake is checked. Assessments at the end of each unit of work are used well to check what pupils have learnt. Pupils themselves, however, are not as fully involved in evaluating their own progress as they should be through assessing, for example, what they know at the start of a topic and evaluating what they have learnt by the end. The subject supports the skills of literacy very well and older pupils use formal language with a fair degree of competence.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- By the end of Year 6 standards are well above average
- The quality of teaching is very good and this helps pupils to achieve highly
- Leadership and management are very good
- ICT is used very well in the other subjects

### **Commentary**

51. The subject is very well planned with the progressive development of skills and knowledge clearly delineated so that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, build securely on what has gone before. Teachers generally have a very good understanding of ICT. They are well trained and use the equipment confidently. They communicate their knowledge very clearly and set challenging tasks so that most pupils make very good progress and achieve highly. For example, in Year 5 pupils use formulae confidently in their work on spreadsheets. By Year 6 most pupils make rapid increases in their skills in this area and produce graphs from the data they have recorded.

52. Teachers manage pupils very well and relationships are very good. Pupils are generally very well behaved and collaborate very well together. This is important in their work in the computer suite where equipment is used sensibly and pupils work very well independently in shared tasks. For example, in Year 6 this enabled all pupils to achieve highly in developing and understanding of the idea of input, module and output. In this work they set up a series of increasingly complex commands to control a very wide range of events in domestic scenes such as, switches, timers, lighting and buzzers. Because they were given challenges suited to their abilities, higher attaining pupils confidently developed their own investigations. Lower ability pupils consolidated their skills with simple switches before moving on to further outputs. The work of lower ability pupils and those with special educational needs is further enhanced by the good support provided by teaching assistants.

53. Leadership and management are very good. The subject co-ordinator makes very good use of his expertise in developing programmes of work and in helping to train and support staff. He was responsible for establishing the very imaginative award winning school website which continues to provide very well presented information about the school. He has played an important role in the improvement of standards since the previous inspection and has a very clear understanding of the way ahead in order to further raise standards.

### **Use of Information Communication technology in other subjects**

54. This is a particular strength of the work in ICT and helps pupils to extend their skills and to improve their understanding of other subjects. In science, in Year 6, pupils used sensors to investigate record in graphs noise levels around school. In Year 5, pupils used e-mail to share with another class the information on the Tudors they had found out using the Internet. They recorded aspects of their geographical field trip on digital cameras. Simulation models were used in Year 3 to budget for classroom furniture as part of work in mathematics and in Year 4, pupils developed skills in musical composition with the aid of computer technology.

55. Computer programs are very well used to support basic skills in English and mathematics in all year groups. ICT is often used in conjunction with a range of subjects. For example, in Year 5 pupils used mathematical skills to measure their physical efforts in such activities as jumping and throwing and recorded these on their computers. When these exercises were repeated they moved on to produce and analyse graphs recording their performance. Throughout the school, pupils used word- processing skills to record their writing in a wide variety of genres. In Year 6, they combine a

range of skills, including speaking and listening and presentational techniques when they make multi-media presentations about the school to parents of pupils about to join Year 3. This helps to develop their confidence and sense of maturity.

## **HUMANITIES**

56. Geography and history were sampled as too few lessons were seen to be able to make secure judgements on provision, teaching or learning in these subjects.

57. No **geography** lessons were available to be seen, but inspectors talked to pupils and looked at their books. Pupils cover an appropriate range of topics, often linked to other subjects, and develop a good range of skills. For example, Year 6 pupils discussed in detail a study of the school's immediate environment and its wider local context. Their detailed record, presented in sophisticated project folders, contained work on maps and coordinates, fieldwork (a survey of local shops) leading to a final summary about life in Tunbridge Wells. The resources for learning are good.

58. Parts of two **history** lessons were seen. Discussions were held with pupils about history and some of their work was scrutinised. Pupils were enthusiastic about history and there are imaginative links with other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 5 were composing music in the style of the Tudors, using similar rhythmic patterns. A feeling of energy and intense interest radiates from the Year 6 work on the Victorians. They make good use of local resources, including census returns, as evidence from which they draw relevant conclusions about Victorian life and as a basis for clear comparisons with the present day.

## **Religious education**

Provision for religious education is **very good**.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are well above average.
- Teaching and learning are good overall, and pupils' work is well marked.
- Pupils interpret what they learn well in the light of their own experiences and produce very thoughtful work.
- Pupils make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of different religions.
- Good use is made of local visits and visitors linked to the teaching of Christianity, but there are still limited links made with places and people of other faiths.

## **Commentary**

59. Pupils' knowledge, and particularly their understanding of what they are taught, is well above average. This is evident in the quality of their writing and in their discussions. The school follows the local education authority's syllabus for the subject which covers a wide range of religions. The subject is well led and managed by knowledgeable coordinator who monitors pupils' work and teachers' planning and is involved in looking at how well pupils are doing throughout the school.

60. The quality of teaching and learning is good. In one lesson, for example, pupils made good progress in developing their knowledge and understanding of Jewish festivals. The teaching successfully linked together different aspects of the subject and used questioning techniques particularly well to revise what pupils knew and what they needed to learn next. Written work is very well presented and marked thoughtfully, often with a question being asked of the pupil. Pupils use a variety of ways to record information, for example, a family tree of people in the Old Testament and a very effective, illustrated account of the history of the Jewish nation. Topics are well organised to balance two key areas: learning about religion and learning from religion. Pupils confirmed that discussions were interesting and searching, requiring them to think for themselves and to come to

individual conclusions. Pupils writing about 'a tough decision' they had to make showed considerable thought and maturity, revealing a capacity to apply what they had learnt to their own lives. The way pupils interpret is well above average.

61. The subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social, cultural and personal development and to their writing skills. Standards, teaching and resources have all improved since the last inspection and are supplemented by a good range of educational visits to different places of worship. Displays in classrooms provide factual information rather than pupils' thoughts and ideas.

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

62. Art and design, design and technology and music were sampled. One lesson was seen in art, one and parts of two others in music, and none seen in design and technology. No overall judgments therefore can be made on provision, teaching or learning in these subjects.

63. Inspectors saw only one **art** lesson, but they looked at the extensive display of pupils' work, from which it is evident that pupils work with a good range of materials and in different styles over the course of each year. Much of the work is very individual and reflects the inspiration of the subject co-ordinator as well as the keen interest and pride that pupils take in their work. In a Year 3 lesson, for example, pupils overlapped different photographic images of themselves and things that mattered to them to create startlingly effective photomontages. Careful preparation included looking at the work of Hockney and Haussmann. Because they had been taught the skills first, their creativity was given full expressive scope. Older pupils talk knowledgeably about what they have learnt and how effective they think some techniques are. Of particular note are the Year 5 paintings, arising from a geography field trip, in which pupils emulated the style of a chosen artist. Year 6 pupils bubbled with excitement as they described their two- and three-dimensional work based on a pose achieved in PE, part of a study of Henry Moore.

64. In **design and technology**, most pupils, including those with special educational needs, develop a thorough understanding of the planning, designing and evaluating process. This was seen in part of a lesson sampled in Year 3 when used a problem solving process to design and make a wide range of well finished artefacts as part of their work in history on the ancient Greeks. Throughout the school pupils use a wide range of materials and tools and produce some attractive and well-finished models. Year 5 pupils produced imaginative models using cams and a large-scale model of the London Eye made from paper was well displayed in the school hall. Year 6 pupils confidently discussed how they planned, designed and made well-constructed and attractively designed moving buggies, some battery and others wind powered. As part of their evaluation they considered in detail how their models met the initial design criteria. Work in design technology is enhanced by opportunities for pupils to participate in after school craft and design technology clubs. These complement work in class. The teachers and teaching assistants who lead them provide a wide range of materials and techniques with which pupils extend their skills and understanding.

65. In **music**, pupils follow an extremely good course, designed by the knowledgeable and talented coordinator who gives freely of his time to developing music in after school and lunchtime clubs. It is no wonder that pupils sing so vigorously, fired up by the lively and dynamic accompaniments on the piano or accompanied by the school's recorder groups who play on a variety of recorders in three and four-part harmony. Expectations of performance are extremely high. Very large numbers of boys and girls take part in the two choirs, three recorder groups and orchestra; it is a school where music abounds throughout the day and those with gifts or talents are given opportunities to shine and to develop their potential. In a very good lesson, there were considerable strengths in the teacher's subject knowledge, extremely high expectations, tight timing and inclusion of pupils of very different abilities. As a result, pupils successfully identified changes in texture in a piece of early music and went on to compose their own, creating different layers of sound with precise rhythmic patterns.

## Physical Education

Provision is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- By the end of Year 6 standards are well above average, continuing the high standards seen at the last inspection.
- The quality of teaching and learning overall is very good so that pupils achieve very highly. In swimming it is excellent, with excellent achievement.
- Provision for extra curricular sporting activities is outstanding.
- Leadership and management are very good, giving a very clear sense of purpose.

### Commentary

66. The curriculum for physical education is very well planned so that teachers know clearly what they are to teach and when, so that pupils build very securely on previous work. This helps them to achieve very highly and reach high standards. The school makes very good use of the expertise of the co-ordinator whose skills and enthusiasm are significant factors in the very good provision. It also makes very good use of specialist instructors to teach games. There is a very strong tradition in school of enthusiastic participation in physical education and sporting activities. The extra curricular provision covers a very wide range of sporting activities and other activities such as dance. This helps to extend skills and knowledge gained in class. Out of school activities are usually very well attended and provision is enhanced by links with local sporting clubs. The school is usually very successful in local competitions.

67. Teachers are generally very well organised and have very high expectations of pupils. This helps lessons to run smoothly and challenges them to improve. In a Year 5 gymnastics lesson, for example, pupils warmed up efficiently so that they were very well prepared for vigorous activity. As the lesson progressed they accepted the responsibility for setting out the large apparatus and for evaluating each other's increasingly more complex partnered sequences of movements. Lessons are usually conducted at a brisk pace so that pupils work hard and make rapid progress. In a games lesson in Year 6 pupils achieved highly because the coach provided opportunities for pupils to use an increasing number of closely linked fielding skills. He used clear explanations and provided ample opportunities for them to practice catching and throwing, before moving on to a game where they used the skills they had developed. Teachers make very good use of demonstrations by themselves and pupils in order to clarify movement qualities and to prompt pupils to reflect on how they might improve. In a dance lesson in Year 4, this enabled pupils to develop a well-established sequence which helped them to adapt such factors as speed and dynamics after the style of Merce Cunningham.

68. The co-ordinator is a very knowledgeable and experienced teacher of swimming. She very effectively leads the teaching of swimming for all classes with each class teacher and two instructors from the local pool. Because she has helped to train teachers and provides excellent support, teachers are generally very skilled at teaching swimming. Pupils from every class are taught to swim every term so that there is continuity and coherence to their learning. This is enhanced by the careful records kept of their progress. Pupils work in small groups which are organised according to ability so that they are challenged at appropriate levels. This helps all pupils to achieve extremely highly. In Year 5, for example, pupils were extremely well managed so that they changed efficiently and were quickly at work in improving their strokes and techniques with the qualified adult allocated to each group. Teachers were constantly challenging pupils to improve. They responded to this very enthusiastically because relationships are very good. Pupils with special needs were particularly well supported so that they had equal opportunity to succeed. All pupils learn to swim. Many go on to reach medal and honours standards. The school is very successful in local swimming galas and many pupils extend their skills through membership of local swimming clubs.

69. Leadership and management are very good. The co-ordinator is very highly qualified and her knowledge and infectious enthusiasm are significant features in the very good provision. She has a very clear understanding of the provision and of how it might be improved. She is very well supported by other teachers and instructors who work very well as a team.

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

70. This area of the curriculum was sampled. The school has a comprehensive sex education programme which is taught in Years 4 and 6 as part of the science curriculum and with the school nurse for older pupils. Education about the uses and misuses of drugs is covered as a distinct topic and with the help of the police. Personal social health and citizenship education are taught on occasions when the whole class gather together. This is complemented by the work of the school council and in dealing with issues such as road safety with the local police. There are many opportunities for pupils to take the initiative and accept responsibility. Pupils help with the smooth running of the school and older pupils help to care for younger pupils who are new to the school. Many older pupils are also trained as mentors to help to sustain relationships during break times. Pupils support a wide range of charities to help those less fortunate than themselves and take the initiative in organising and running stalls during fund raising activities

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	2
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>2</b>
Pupils' achievement	3
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)</b>	<b>2</b>
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>2</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	1
Accommodation and resources	3
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	3
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>2</b>
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	2

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