

INSPECTION REPORT

CHASE TERRACE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Burntwood

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique reference number: 124207

Headteacher: Ms P J Roberts

Lead inspector: Mrs O Cooper

Dates of inspection: 20 – 22 October 2003

Inspection number: 255763

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:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	469
School address:	Rugeley Road Chase Terrace Burntwood Staffordshire
Postcode:	WS7 1AH
Telephone number:	01543 510500
Fax number:	01543 510502
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Diane Evans
Date of previous inspection:	17 May 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The area served by the school consists of mixed privately owned and local authority housing, but with much low paid employment and pockets of deprivation. The pupils are predominantly white, mostly of United Kingdom heritage and very few speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is broadly average; with wide ranging needs and physical difficulties being most prominent. The mobility of pupils is not an issue for this school. Overall attainment on entry to the nursery is slightly below that expected for the pupils' ages. The school has received several awards in recent years including; a School Achievement Award in 2001 for improved standards, Dyslexia Friendly status, Healthy Promoting School award and Investors in People status. The school is currently seeking an Inclusion Quality Mark. The school has a unique ethos focused on valuing people and achievements, which supports its drive to attain the highest possible standards. A recent focus on learning initiatives is helping to raise standards by concentrating on how pupils learn effectively.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
10859	Mrs Olga Cooper	Lead inspector	Mathematics Information & communication technology Music English as an additional language
13450	Mrs Jenny Madden	Lay inspector	
17877	Mrs Christine Ingham	Team inspector	Design and technology Physical education Religious education Foundation Stage
33226	Mr Tim Sherriff	Team inspector	Science Geography History
22046	Dr Jo Jolliffe	Team inspector	English Art and design Special educational needs

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	8
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	11
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	16
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	18
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	31

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Chase Terrace is a **good** school where pupils **achieve well**. Current overall standards are above average in Year 2 and Year 6. The overall leadership and management of the school are very good, teaching and the curriculum are good and pupils' personal qualities develop very well. The school provides **good value for money**.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The headteacher's leadership and management of the school are excellent and inspire pupils and staff.
- Standards are above average in English, mathematics and science in Years 2 and 6.
- Most pupils throughout the school do as well as they can and their achievement is good.
- Teaching and learning are good throughout the school.
- The curriculum is good and innovative; lessons are interesting and effective links with other schools enrich the experiences offered.
- Pupils' writing skills could be developed further through other subjects.
- The quality of the marking of pupils' work is inconsistent.

Improvement since the previous inspection has been good. Standards at the end of Year 6 have risen from the well below average standards in 2000 and the key issue relating to standards in both Year 2 and Year 6 has been remedied. The other areas for improvement in aspects of the management and efficiency of the school have been overcome. Subject co-ordinators monitor closely the standards in their subjects; all nursery children receive their full entitlement; teaching assistants are very well deployed and the school's aims are clearly linked to the targets in the school improvement plan.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			Similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	E*	D	C	D
Mathematics	E	C	E	E
Science	E*	D	D	E

*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.*

The table above does not reflect the current situation in the school. The full impact of the excellent leadership of the headteacher is now beginning to become evident and overall **achievement is good** throughout the school. Standards on entry to the nursery are below average, particularly in language and communication skills. By the end of their year in reception, most are on course to reach the goals children are expected to reach in all areas of learning and to exceed them in their personal and social development. By Year 2, standards are above average in reading, writing and mathematics, and are well above average in science and art and design. Standards in Year 6 are above average in English, mathematics, science, history and religious education and are well above average in art and design. However, there is room for further improvement in pupils' writing skills through other subjects to build on the improvement evident in the 2003 national tests. In all other subjects seen standards are average throughout. The very good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and the consistently good teaching have been key factors in the rising standards.

Pupils' personal qualities are very good, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Most pupils arrive on time and are very eager to learn. The behaviour of most pupils

is very good in lessons and around the school. Pupils appreciate the wide range of extra-curricular activities and are very keen to take part. **Attendance is satisfactory** and the procedures for monitoring it are very good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good, the recent focus on how pupils' learn is having a positive impact. The teaching of basic skills in literacy and numeracy is good and helping the drive to raise standards. This is because teachers have undertaken further training, extended the range of teaching methods used, improved their assessment of pupils' attainment and introduced resources such as interactive white boards. Consequently lessons are more interesting and the pace of pupils' learning has increased. Teaching assistants provide excellent support for teachers and pupils and make a significant contribution to the good teaching and learning. All pupils have targets for improvement and so know what they need to do to move on to the next stage in their learning. The only weaker aspect of teaching is the inconsistency in marking. The implementation of the National Literacy Strategy has been adapted well to meet the pupils' learning needs, but still allowing ample time for the development of pupils' creativity. The school's care for its pupils, and its links with parents and the community are very good and significantly enhance the overall provision.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall leadership and management of the school are very good. The headteacher leads by example in her teaching and management roles and inspires the staff to follow her lead. There is a clear vision for the development of the school, and all staff are aware of their role in bringing about school improvement. Senior managers provide very good support and through professional development the subject co-ordinators and team leaders are now influencing standards and developing teaching. The schools' self-evaluation procedures, its strategic planning and commitment to including all pupils fully in lessons and other activities are excellent. The school has received several awards in recent years recognising its good practice, based on an ethos of valuing individuals and their achievement.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are highly satisfied with the school's provision.

Pupils are highly satisfied with all aspects of the school, but are unhappy that a very small number do not always follow the school's code of conduct.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Further improve pupils' writing skills through other subjects.
- Improve the consistency in the marking of pupils' work.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement in the Foundation Stage is good in all areas of learning. For pupils in Years 1 to 6 **achievement is good overall**. In English, mathematics, science and art and design, achievement is good throughout the school. In music in Years 1 and 2, and in history and religious education in Years 3 to 6, achievement is good. In all other subjects and year groups achievement is satisfactory, except for design and technology throughout the school and physical education in Years 1 and 2, where insufficient evidence was available for judgements to be made. The attainment of boys is no longer an issue in the school, with boys achieving as well as girls. There are more boys with learning or behavioural difficulties, which affects the overall statistics. The underachievement in mathematics at the end of Year 6 in recent years has also been successfully overcome. Current standards are above average in English, mathematics and science in Years 2 and 6 and are well above average in science in Year 2.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Above average standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of Years 2 and 6.
- Well above average standards in art and design in Years 2 and 6.
- Achievement is good as all groups of pupils do as well as they can.
- Standards in writing could be improved further.

Commentary

1. Standards at the end of Year 2 in 2002 were broadly average in reading and writing and above average in mathematics as shown in the table below. They compared satisfactorily with those of similar schools being in line with the average in reading and writing and well above average in mathematics. An above average proportion of pupils exceeded the level expected in mathematics, whereas in writing the proportion was below average, indicating some higher attaining pupils could have done better. The school identified this and focused on standards in writing and a notable improvement of 11 percentage points was evident in the 2003 results in writing at the higher level. However, overall results declined in 2003 because the attainment profile of the year group was lower.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2002

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	16.3 (17.5)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	14.5 (15.5)	14.4 (14.3)
Mathematics	17.4 (18.2)	16.5 (16.2)

There were 60 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. Standards at the end of Year 6 in 2002, as shown in the table below, were broadly average in English, but were below the national average in science and well below in mathematics. There was evidence of underachievement among this group of pupils between Years 3 and 6, which the school identified and took action to remedy. Some improvement was evident in the school's 2003 results, in the proportion reaching the expected level in English and science and in the higher level in mathematics and science. The best improvement was in standards in writing, which improved by 25 percentage points. The very effective assessment procedures, rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning, along with the emphasis on different styles of learning are beginning to show in pupils' attainment.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2002

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.7 (25.8)	27.0 (27.0)
Mathematics	25.5 (26.3)	26.7 (26.6)
Science	27.5 (27.9)	28.3 (28.3)

There were 77 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

3. Current standards of work in the Foundation Stage are broadly average. Most children are on course to reach the goals they are expected to reach by the end of reception, with a significant number likely to exceed these goals in all the areas of learning. In their personal, social and emotional development the proportion of children likely to exceed the expected goals is higher and overall attainment above average for their age.
4. In Year 2, current standards in reading, writing and mathematics are above average. In science, standards are well above average. The different learning initiatives implemented recently are continuing to impact on pupils' learning and standards are on course to rise in 2004. Boys' achievement continues to be as good as that of girls. Pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language make good progress and achieve well in relation to their targets.
5. Standards in Year 6 are above average in English, mathematics and science. The analysis of pupils' performance in national tests in 2003 indicated pupils could improve their writing skills still further. Inspection evidence supports this judgement, writing skills are insufficiently promoted through other subjects. Action taken to improve accuracy in spelling has been successful and this aspect is no longer a weakness. Standards in information and communication technology and geography in Years 2 and 6 and in physical education in Year 6 are average. In history and religious education, standards are broadly average in Year 2 and rise above average in Year 6. Standards in art and design are well above average in both Years 2 and 6. In music, standards are above average in Year 2 and average in Year 6. The accommodation in classrooms in Years 3 to 6 is cramped for practical activities, which hinders the speed with which instruments can be given out and affects the overall quality of teaching. The weakness in standards in singing has been fully remedied. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement on standards in design and technology and in physical education in Year 2.
6. All pupils have individual targets for improvement and know what they have to do to move onto the next stage in their learning. Lesson planning includes activities for pupils at different stages of development, including those with special educational or behavioural needs, or with English as an additional language and the excellent support and deployment of the teaching assistants has a major influence over the standards achieved.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities are **very well developed** by the school.

Pupils' attitudes to the school and their behaviour are **very good**. The development of **pupils'** spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also **very good**. Attendance and punctuality are **satisfactory**.

Strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have very good attitudes to the school, which, they like and take full advantage of all it has to offer.

- The very good behaviour in the school is a direct result of the behaviour management and high expectations of the staff.
- The school has a successful record of integrating pupils from special schools into mainstream education.
- Personal development of individual pupils is promoted by the school in such a way, that pupils become mature, responsible, sociable and thoughtful as they progress through the school.
- Strategies for the monitoring and promotion of pupil's attendance are very good but, in spite of this, the school has so far failed to persuade some parents to refrain from taking pupils out of school for holidays during term time.

Commentary

7. Pupils attend school regularly and most arrive on time for the start of the school day and are keen to begin learning. The school's methods for encouraging full time attendance are comprehensive and mainly effective, the major exception being holidays taken by pupils during term time. Overall attendance as shown below is broadly in line with the national average.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	4.9
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.4
National data	0.5

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

8. Pupils are happy and confident when arriving at school from the nursery onwards, they are keen to work in the well-managed learning environment and quickly become engrossed in lessons to the extent that they are often reluctant to stop working at the end of the lesson. They are supportive of one another in lessons and work effectively in pairs and groups as they gain in maturity. In the playground pupils are relaxed and enjoy themselves in separate play areas, older pupils being especially well supervised but both areas would benefit from more constructive play opportunities. The extra-curricular activities extend pupils' interest and enthusiasm in school and add considerably to their range of skills. The school ensures pupils with special educational needs or physical difficulties are included, and their self-esteem develops well as a result. Pupils with English as an additional language are also included if they wish to help them speak English more confidently. No pupils have been excluded for unacceptable behaviour in the latest reporting period.

Exclusions

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	359	0	0
White – any other White background	97	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	2	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	1	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	3	0	0

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

9. The emphasis on pupil's personal development begins in the Nursery where pupils are already beginning to work co-operatively and negotiate with each other. By Year 4 pupils are thinking deeply about and discussing such concepts as peace and how this can be achieved in the world, in this they show considerable depth of understanding. Continual exposure to music and the arts in the school through the curriculum, the diverse range of visits and visitors to the school and extra-curricular activities, heighten their cultural awareness. The staff in the school provide consistent role models for respect, understanding and moral values of which pupils are very aware and are able to carry through into, for example, the playground rules which they worked out as a school.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is **good**. The teaching is **good** and enables pupils to achieve well over time in the school. The curriculum provides a wide range of interesting, relevant experiences and good opportunities for learning. The curricular provision for pupils with special educational needs is **very good**.

Teaching and learning

The quality of **teaching and learning is good overall** and has been maintained since the previous inspection despite the promotion of several key members of staff.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching assistants provide excellent support for teachers and pupils and improve learning.
- Teachers have secure subject knowledge and plan lessons very well.
- Throughout the school teachers insist on high standards of behaviour.
- Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are very good, individual pupil targets are set, although the marking of pupils' work is inconsistent between classes.
- Resources for learning are used very well in Years 1 to 6.
- Too many worksheets are used in mathematics, particularly in Years 1 and 2, which hinder pupils' ability to record their work independently.

Commentary

10. Teaching and learning are good throughout the school, as unsatisfactory teaching is rare. This is highlighted in the table below which shows the quality of lessons seen during the inspection. There are many strengths in the teaching and no significant weaknesses. This is because of the rigorous programme for monitoring and developing the teaching by the headteacher and subject co-ordinators and the strong emphasis on staff development and training. In addition, the headteacher leads by example in her classroom practice, providing a good role model for others.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 62 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3 (5%)	15 (24%)	29 (47%)	14 (23%)	1 (2%)	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.

11. Teachers throughout the school plan their lessons well, and very well in Years 1 to 6, with a clear focus on what pupils of different levels of attainment are expected to learn, including those with special educational needs, or with English as an additional language. The purpose of lessons is usually shared with the pupils at the beginning and often pupils assess for

themselves how well they think they have done, which helps them to understand their pace of learning. Teachers note on their planning where pupils have not achieved what was expected, or where particularly good progress was made and amend their planning accordingly, either moving pupils on more quickly to the next stage of learning, or reinforcing the new work through further teaching. Secure subject knowledge enables teachers to pose challenging questions and give clear explanations which help lessons move at a good pace as pupils know what they have to do to complete their tasks successfully.

12. Teaching assistants, of which there are a high number compared with most schools, provide excellent support for the teachers and pupils and significantly enhance pupils' learning. Like the teachers they undertake training and many have good skills and knowledge, for example, in information and communication technology, which is extremely valuable when all pupils are working on computers in the suite, preventing pupils from having to wait for support. Most are skilful in questioning pupils to help them complete tasks successfully, without doing the work for them. A teaching assistant plays the piano for music lessons and this again provides very good support for the teaching and learning. Teaching assistants work very effectively with individual pupils with special educational needs or with small groups where the work is well matched to the pupils' individual targets and helps pupils to learn and achieve well.
13. Resources for learning are used well throughout and very well in Years 1 to 6. Computers are used well before school and at lunchtimes to increase the pace of learning in mathematics, but less effectively in class lessons. The interactive whiteboards and digital projectors are used very effectively in lessons to enable teachers to give clear explanations through accessing their own slides or lessons from other sources. Monitoring of the performance of boys has shown improvement since the interactive whiteboards were installed, as lessons are more interesting. While the library was not seen in use during the inspection, discussions with pupils revealed it is used more extensively normally.
14. The school's behaviour management strategies are applied consistently in lessons throughout the school and behaviour support programmes implemented for pupils with behavioural difficulties. These are closely monitored, which along with the teachers' insistence on high standards of behaviour leads to the very good behaviour overall. Teachers ensure all pupils are fully integrated into lessons and assemblies, including those in wheelchairs or with English as an additional language. Individual education plans are used effectively when planning activities and followed through in lessons, ensuring tasks are usually closely matched to the learning needs of different groups of pupils. Overall teaching has improved since the previous inspection as the proportion of satisfactory or better lessons has increased.
15. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are very good throughout and enable the school to identify any pupils falling behind or where further improvement can be made. Additional national strategies in English and mathematics are used to help pupils to catch up and the progress of such pupils analysed to determine the impact and cost effectiveness of the additional support. For example, all Year 2 pupils receiving support in 2003 reached the expected level for their age by the end of the year. Where assessment information identifies pupils needing a boost to their performance prior to taking national tests in Year 6, such classes are set up. The only area of weakness in assessment procedures is in the inconsistency in marking, some is of very good quality, informing pupils what they need to focus on in order to move on to the next stage in their learning. However, some marking simply gives praise and some work is just ticked, giving pupils no indication as to how well they have completed their work. Teachers and teaching assistants use assessment very effectively to monitor the progress of pupils with special educational needs or with English as an additional language and to set appropriate targets. Assessment procedures have improved since the previous inspection.
16. The use of commercial worksheets, particularly in mathematics is hindering pupils' abilities to record their work independently and make decisions about the best way to write down what

they have learned. Pupils are constrained by the amount of space on the sheet for writing, and often only put missing numbers in boxes in mathematics, without understanding fully what they are recording. Pupils do not always achieve as much as they could in these lessons, as they are unable to show how much they know and understand.

The curriculum

The overall curriculum provision in the school is **good**. The range of opportunities to enrich the pupils' learning activities is **very good**. The accommodation is **satisfactory**. The resources for learning are **good** and sufficient to meet the needs of most pupils.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum fully meets statutory requirements and offers a broad range of relevant and interesting opportunities for learning.
- Curriculum development and innovation are very good.
- Equality of access and opportunity for all groups of pupils is very good.
- A very good range of extra curricular activities including sport and the arts significantly contributes to pupils' learning.
- The very good contribution of support staff.

Commentary

17. Since the last inspection the school has continued to improve the curriculum opportunities it provides and has ensured that collective acts of worship now meet statutory requirements. A strength of the curriculum documentation is in the links made with the school's aims. The provision for information and communication technology has improved and this is beginning to have an impact on standards. The introduction of literacy skills sessions on all class timetables has made a significant impact on the pupils' achievements in English.
18. The curricular provision in the Foundation Stage is good. The children enjoy their activities and make rapid strides in learning because the staff have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and of how young children learn. A real curricular strength is the commitment given to the planning of play and practical activities as the main strategy for learning and a way to develop the children's communication skills. Personal, social and emotional development is a particular strength giving the children confidence and developing their self-esteem and providing a firm foundation for the next stage of education.
19. Curriculum documentation reflects the school's commitment to continuous curriculum innovation and development. The staff have worked together, with the effective guidance from the headteacher, to develop creativity in curriculum delivery. Whilst this is in the early stages there is evidence of achievement. These initiatives are further supported through the work of the Advanced Skills Teacher (AST). In addition, the introduction of the Learning to Learn initiative has developed the staff's skills to plan a range of teaching styles to cater for the learning needs of individual pupils.
20. Innovations have also included provision for Children with High Intellectual Potential (CHIP) and the appointment of a Fast Track teacher to lead the initiative. This initiative includes developing 'Treasure Chests', banks of challenging intellectual tasks to take the learning of these pupils forward.
21. The headteacher and staff are totally committed to ensuring all pupils have access to the curriculum provided including those with special educational needs, those who have disabilities and those with English as an additional language. This is evident in policy statements, lesson plans and in the full integration of pupils in classroom activities. This provision is a real strength in the school. Planning carefully takes account of their individual

needs and teachers and teaching assistants prepare activities very relevant for their next stage in learning.

22. Pupils' learning is enriched through a wide range of extra curricular activities through lunchtime and after school clubs, which are well attended. They include sports and arts clubs. The Dance Club is an innovative music group, which has proved to be very successful and popular with pupils. Many visits and visitors contribute to the curriculum and Year 6 pupils benefit from two residential visits including one to the Isle of Wight. Curriculum focused days are also included such as the 'Greek Day' when pupils experience life as Greek pupils and parents share in the day.
23. Classroom assistants very effectively support teachers. They are fully briefed on their role and have developed very good relationships with the pupils. Classroom assistants make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning. They are particularly effective because of the school's commitment to their training and professional development.
24. Effective use is made of the accommodation and pupils' work is very attractively displayed and well organised. It provides a very good environment for learning, although space for practical activities is limited in many classrooms. The buildings are clean and very well maintained. Resources are generally good and recent improvements include information and communication technology resources and sets of books for guided reading. A good range of resources is available to suit pupils with special educational needs and adaptations to the building ensure pupils with physical disabilities can be accommodated. Pupils with English as an additional language receive additional support and resources specific to their needs are available. As a result they make good progress in learning to speak English. The flair and ingenuity of the staff in the foundation stage is shown in the excellent organisation of the nursery and reception classrooms. The displays are outstanding and resources are plentiful and of a high quality. All creates a vibrant and purposeful learning environment where the children are secure and purposefully engaged.

Care, guidance and support

Pupils are very well cared for, supported and guided by the school.

The school's care, welfare, health and safety of pupils are **very good**.

There is **very good** provision for pupils' support, advice and guidance based on monitoring of their progress.

The school ensures **very good** involvement of pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All aspects of pupils' care including child protection, their welfare, health and safety have a very high priority in the school.
- The school ensures pupils are provided with very well targeted support advice and guidance for their academic and personal development.
- The very good trusting and respectful relationships developed in the school ensure that pupils always have a known adult in whom they can confide.
- The induction of pupils into the school especially in to the nursery and reception classes and to the secondary phase of education ensures that they are very well prepared for the experience.
- The school regularly consults pupils about the school and their learning and incorporates their views into target setting and school life in general.

Commentary

25. All staff and governors are involved in the care of pupils; they have clear roles and are well trained to fulfil them. The daily procedures in use ensure pupils' health and safety during their time in school. This is enhanced by the school's involvement in the healthy living initiative. Child protection matters are comprehensively covered and all staff are trained and kept up to date by the responsible members of senior staff.
26. Staff and pupils respect and like each other and teachers through meticulous record keeping have a complete picture of each pupil as they move through the school. As a result they are able to provide support for individual pupils through targets and the use of clearly differentiated learning objectives, which provide the basis of intervention for all pupils. The very good induction scheme provides pupils entering the nursery and reception classes with a level of support that ensures a happy and confident start to their school life. The transition to the secondary sector is similarly well planned to ensure that pupils are confident and comfortable in their new environment and the new school has a clear picture of their levels of attainment and personality.
27. The school takes the opinions of pupils very seriously and provides a range of experiences through which opinions can be heard; these include Circle Time, the School Council, questionnaires, assessment procedures and target setting. In this way the school acknowledges each pupil's role as a partner in their education and in the school. This is increased for pupils with special needs so that they are involved in review meetings, target setting and formation of individual education plans.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very good links with parents have gained their confidence and ensured their good opinion of the school.
- Information provided by the school ensures that parents are kept fully informed about their children and school life in general.
- Parents are regularly consulted.
- The school now has flourishing relationships with many parts of the community both young and old, which works for their mutual benefit.
- There are strong links with other schools, which support joint experiences for pupils.

Commentary

28. The school makes great efforts to involve parents in the life of the school and engages in numerous events and initiatives that are extremely well supported by parents. They are kept well informed by the school about the curriculum, homework, targets and test results, ways in which they can help their children improve and the general life of the school. In addition they are regularly consulted through questionnaires and when particular issues arise, parents now expect this regular involvement in decision-making. A large number of parents respond to this approach by becoming involved in their children's learning, but others find this level of commitment difficult to manage.
29. Many local organisations are involved with the school through using the facilities and as part of the schools work in widening the views and learning opportunities of pupils. As a result the school and staff are very well regarded in the locality and this plays a great part in the fund raising activities, organised by the Friends of the School association. As a consequence this has enabled the school to obtain considerable amounts of vital equipment and to finance special visits for pupils. The high quality visitors who spend time with pupils on cultural activities involving music, song and dance enable the pupils to put on performances for the

community that are very highly regarded and provide a wonderful experience for all who attend.

30. The school is part of a local school group, which together is able to provide many pupils with a wide range of experiences including, for example, workshops for the talented pupils and an area choir. The school has developed an effective range of links with the next school to be attended by the majority of pupils on the same campus. These ensure that pupils spend time in the secondary school through curricular links, which significantly enhance learning opportunities. In addition, staff from the secondary school help in teaching in the school as well as mentoring teachers.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall leadership and management of the school are **very good**. The headteacher is an **excellent** leader and manager. Key staff assist the headteacher **very well** in leading and managing the school. The governing body makes a **good** and important contribution by supporting the school well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The leadership and management of the head teacher are excellent.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very well co-ordinated, and all pupils fully included in lessons.
- The skills of the staff team are being well developed through continuous professional development.
- Strategic planning and monitoring by the governing body and the senior management team are bringing about school improvement and raising standards.
- The school uses self-evaluation procedures to very good effect.

Commentary

31. The school has clearly stated aims and a commitment to excellence, which are apparent to all. They are translated into action very effectively by the governing body, the headteacher and her team of staff.
32. The school benefits from the support of a committed governing body, which is well led by the knowledgeable chairperson. The governing body has good knowledge of the school and is active in shaping its direction. The school improvement plan seeks to bring about the highest possible standards for all pupils and is regularly monitored by the governing body, which receives informative reports from the head teacher. The chair of the governing body actively monitors the quality of teaching. The governing body ensures that all statutory duties are met and that it provides support and guidance as well as challenge. The headteacher, the governing body and the staff are strongly committed to ensuring that there are inclusive practices throughout the school.
33. The headteacher's vision for the school is absolutely clear in pursuit of the highest possible standards for all pupils. Her leadership has had a substantial impact on standards, the whole school community and the school's practices. She is clearly focused on raising standards through high quality teaching and commitment to continuing professional development for all staff. The headteacher works closely with the deputy headteacher whose strengths are complementary and other senior staff, to ensure that the school is very effectively managed. The Foundation Stage and special educational needs co-ordinators provide very good leadership and management of these aspects, which are beneficial to pupils' learning and attainment and have improved the provision since the previous inspection. The headteacher together with the governing body and the staff team, have created a learning environment, which is efficient, creative and inclusive. The head teacher strongly promotes self-evaluation to bring about improvement. The school closely monitors pupils' performance, very carefully,

tracking their progress to identify and deal with any underachievement. Performance management and professional development are put to good effect and play a major part in developing effective teams of staff. There is an 'Advanced Skills' teacher and a 'Fast Track' teacher on the staff. Of particular note is the impact of professional development on the skills of teaching assistants.

34. Teachers, teaching assistants and administrative staff are well deployed and have clear roles. The school has Investors in People status and is very close to gaining the local authority's Inclusion Quality Mark. The school has above average income and expenditure, including Single Regeneration Budget funding. There was a larger than usual surplus, inherited by the present head teacher, but the governors drew up a strategic five -year plan to deal with this, and the surplus is now acceptable. Financial decisions are always subject to 'best value' considerations. The school manages its funding effectively, in the best interests of the pupils, and gives good value for money.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	1,078,710
Total expenditure	1,036,410
Expenditure per pupil	2,432

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	50,640
Balance carried forward to the next	42,300

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good quality of teaching and learning.
- The good quality and range of practical activities planned in the curriculum.
- The very good procedures for assessment.
- The positive impact of the accommodation and resources on children's learning.
- The very good leadership of the co-ordinator and nursery supervisor.

Commentary

35. The children are admitted into the nursery in September following their third birthday on a part time basis. They join the reception classes in the following September for full time attendance. Assessments soon after they start indicate that on entry to the nursery, the children's attainment is below that expected for their age particularly in relation to their speech and language skills. The children achieve well in the Foundation Stage and by the end of the reception year, standards are in line with those expected in all the areas of learning and above in personal, social and emotional development. In communication, language and literacy and mathematical development, many children are likely to exceed the expected levels.
36. Teaching is good overall and frequently very good. The nursery nurses and classroom assistants make a significant contribution to the children's learning. Main strengths lie in the staff's commitment, their hard work in organising their classrooms and planning lessons. The staff know and manage the children well and often adapt their teaching, choosing activities that interest the children and motivate them to want to learn.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most of the children will exceed the goals expected by the end of the reception year.
- The children's behaviour and attitudes to learning are very good.
- The children are confident and have high levels of self-esteem.

Commentary

37. The personal development of the children is a key aim and strength of the Foundation Stage and comes from careful planning and observation. A strong sense of community typifies the nursery and reception classes where each child is treated as a valued member. There is a strong emphasis on meeting the needs of individuals. The rewarding of children's efforts is a key feature in the work of the staff and this motivates the children to do their best and they achieve well. The children in the nursery soon begin to understand that good behaviour is expected and the staff sensitively and calmly manage any disruptive behaviour and help these young children to understand why it is not acceptable. In the reception classes, the children begin to develop self-discipline. The very good behaviour and attitudes to learning are also due to the exciting range of learning opportunities provided. On many occasions, the

children's enjoyment of activities such as role-play, painting and music making, was very evident from their laughter and participation. The staff have worked hard to structure an environment which promotes independence. Among the many worthwhile activities to develop the children's confidence and self-esteem are sessions when the children work together, for example, in family groups in the nursery.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The development of communication skills as part of almost all activities.
- The effective implementation of the Literacy Strategy in reception classes.
- The development of children's writing skills through purposeful tasks.

Commentary

38. Through a wide range of well planned activities supplemented by the very effective use of spontaneous opportunities for learning, the children's skills in all the elements are successfully developed and the children achieve well. By the end of the reception year many children are likely to be working within level one of the National Curriculum because they are given very good support from the staff and learning is developed through practical activities which interest the children. The staff skilfully help the children to extend their vocabulary by using and talking about unfamiliar words. The nursery staff are sensitive to those children who are as yet reluctant to speak in a group. Spoken language continues to be central to all activities in the reception classes when the children are encouraged to offer contributions resulting in their increased ability to express their ideas. The children in reception classes enjoy the Literacy Strategy. Focused activities are well planned and linked to a theme to consolidate learning and they are appropriately matched to the children's levels of attainment. Most children want to write because they have a reason to do so, for example, to write a birthday card or a list for shopping.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good quality and range of practical activities in the nursery.
- The effective implementation of the Numeracy Strategy in reception classes.
- Good use of computers to support learning in number and shape.

Commentary

39. The teaching of mathematics through practical activities is a strength in the nursery programme. The staff make effective use of ongoing routines to heighten children's awareness of different aspects of mathematics. At the start of each nursery session, the 'helper of the day' points to the number line as children count the number present. The children have opportunities to practise mathematical skills, for example, as they paint five red apples, add and take away using the frogs and lily pads and use puppets to act out number rhymes. The reception children's learning in mathematics is successfully developed through activities linked to a theme planned for the numeracy session, such as 'The Supermarket'. In a lesson focused on 'shape' every task had a link, for example, making a 'cylinder person' and finding and naming three-dimensional shapes hidden in the sand. In all mathematics

lessons the children have access to computer programs to consolidate their learning, for example, to practise counting and number recognition.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The activities set for the children cater well for the needs of different groups.
- Good use is made of visits and visitors to enrich learning.
- Effective links are made with communication, language and literacy.

Commentary

40. When children first start in the nursery, many have a limited knowledge of the world around them. Teachers plan a very interesting range of activities to develop this knowledge. The children develop confidence and interest to talk about their world through opportunities to play with toys and participate in role-play. Much learning is through exploration and experimentation. Nursery children delight in walking through autumn leaves and hearing the 'crunching' sounds they make. Visits and visitors are effectively included to enrich the children's learning. Children in the nursery observed how a spinning wheel was used and reception children visited a local supermarket where they saw how food was stored and where bread was made. The staff ensure good links are made with literacy, for example, by using information books to help children to find out about different materials.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The outdoor areas are well resourced to help the children to learn.
- The planned activities are imaginative and interesting.
- The high quality of staff intervention to take learning forward.

Commentary

41. The children's physical skills develop well because they have access to a very good range of resources in a well-organised outdoor area. These include large adventurous equipment, wheeled toys and small equipment. The resources are challenging for all ages and levels of attainment and stimulate the children to be adventurous and try new skills. The children enjoy outdoor play because the activities are so varied. There is much enthusiasm as children negotiate the pathways on tricycles and crawl through a tunnel. The staff share in the activities with the children and provide a high level of challenge. This high level of interaction and intervention enables the children to achieve well.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good quality of role-play activities.
- The children's interest and enjoyment in music.
- The development of artistic skills is good.

Commentary

42. Play is enriched through a wide range of activities that occur in role-play areas when the children pretend to be who they want to be and use resources imaginatively. In the nursery the children gained great pleasure as they dressed as nursery rhyme characters. Music plays an important part in children's learning. They often choose instruments as a choice activity and enjoy making sounds. The children love music and rhymes which are a part of daily routines. Many carefully prepared activities are provided to allow the children to explore colour and texture, for example, when they print with vegetables in the reception class. When the children in the nursery painted their sheep, they were encouraged to observe and pay attention to colours and how to move a brush in different ways to create different effects. As a result they produced some very good pictures.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Leadership and management are excellent; teaching and learning are good.
- The curriculum is very good and poetry is a particular strength.
- The support of teaching assistants is very well focused and is helping to improve the quality of learning for individual pupils.
- The newly introduced skills sessions are effective, particularly in developing independent writing skills.
- Performance data is put to very good use to set targets and raise standards.
- There is scope to further improve literacy across the curriculum.

Commentary

43. The 2002 results of national tests in Year 6 were broadly in line with the national average. They were, however, below the average for similar schools. The performance of boys and girls was similar. In the 2002 tests, results for Year 2 pupils were broadly average in reading and writing compared with all schools and similar schools. There has been an overall improvement in standards in Year 6 between 2000 and 2003, when the school achieved its highest standards ever in writing and 82 percent of pupils reached at least the national standard.
44. Standards seen during the inspection were above average. By the end of Year 2, pupils have good reading skills. The higher attaining pupils read very well, and are becoming independent readers. The pupils of average attainment have simpler texts from which they read most words correctly, and can work out other words by using their phonetic knowledge. Lower attaining pupils can read one-syllable words correctly, but hesitate on two syllable words without support. Pupils with special educational needs are familiar with handling books and know where the title, author and text are placed. Speaking and listening skills are satisfactory, although pupils with English as an additional language are well supported and make good progress in learning to speak English. Pupils listen attentively and are able to explain what they mean or feel and can describe events. They are able to engage in conversation and have good vocabulary. By the end of Year 2, pupils' handwriting and writing skills are above average. The best readers read often at home and are well supported by their parents and so make better progress. Good use is made of the home-school reading record.

45. Current standards in Year 6 are above average and have improved on last year. The newly introduced daily skills' sessions are already having a very positive impact on standards. The very good quality of assessment is also helping to focus teachers and pupils on developing higher level literacy skills, by setting individual pupil targets. Of particular note, is pupils' very good appreciation of language and of poetry in particular. In one Year 6 lesson, pupils discussed alliteration without prompting, and could give very good examples. They also discussed mood and expressed themselves well. In writing they use dialogue effectively and can compare different types of texts and write from different points of view. They understand the need to structure extended writing and that the ending is of importance. They have produced a range of different and interesting endings to their writing. The majority of pupils are fluent readers who read for pleasure.
46. Pupils' overall achievement is good throughout the year groups. Pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language are achieving well in relation to their individual targets. A gifted and talented group of pupils has been identified and there are plans to further promote their achievement. The very good tracking of pupils' progress from year to year helps in ensuring all are making at least the expected rate of progress. Additional support is provided for any falling behind their peers.
47. Teaching and learning are good overall. Teachers are competent, well prepared and efficient. They make effective use of additional national strategies, which are well tailored to meet the needs of pupils. Skills sessions are often used to prepare pupils for the English lesson which follows, and this ensures that best use is made of time for learning. Pupils are provided with rich opportunities to experience a range of language and literature. At present, Year 6 pupils are studying Shakespeare, which is well taught by teachers who give pupils tasks and activities pitched at the just the right level. Teachers ensure that all pupils are included and often, activities such as role-play are designed to improve the quality of learning for boys. Poetry writing is particularly good and pupils produce some vivid lines and images, for instance "The silence that fills the world, and mist, mist, mist." A poetry club is well attended and pupils enjoy writing their own poems. Teachers use a range of techniques to develop pupils' language and literacy, including mind mapping, thought tapping and hot seating. This is resulting in pupils being more involved in the learning process.

Example of outstanding practice

In one outstanding lesson, the teacher expertly encouraged pupils to provide vivid descriptions by setting an atmosphere in which they used their imagination and then burst into discussion with their partners. Excitedly, they produced descriptive phrases such as 'snapping twigs', 'grass rustling', 'crunching leaves'. They were also able to explain the mood conveyed by each phrase. Images were projected on to the interactive whiteboard whilst the teacher set the scene. The pace of the lesson was swift and exciting, enthusing the pupils to be involved.

48. The good teaching of pupils from Years 3 to 6 is helping to improve their independent reading and writing skills. This is evident in Year 6 where pupils discuss how much they enjoyed 'A Midsummer Night's Dream'. Their ability to express themselves is very good. In some lessons a brain gym session is used at the start of the lesson to get pupils thinking. National strategies are being put to very good effect and teaching assistants are providing very good support to pupils with special educational needs and other pupils who need more intensive support. There are excellent examples of practice where the teaching assistant's expertise is greatly improving pupils' skills and is helping their achievement. Pupils who are potentially gifted and talented have been identified. A programme to support their achievement is in place, but has not yet had time to make a noticeable difference.
49. The school's professional development programme has ensured that all teaching assistants are well trained and able to provide quality support to help develop pupils' literacy skills. Teachers use assessment very effectively to track pupils' improvement. Pupils have targets of which they are aware and these are helping to focus their efforts. Marking is variable but is

always at least satisfactory. Marking in Year 6 is particularly good, as it is very explicit and helpful. Teachers give pupils useful tasks to complete for homework.

50. The present subject co-ordinator has continued to build on and develop excellent practices and improve resources. She is knowledgeable and leads by example. Teaching and learning are regularly monitored. The subject leader is up to date with national strategies and new thinking good quality books have been purchased to add interest, particularly for boys. There has been good improvement in English since the last inspection.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

51. The development of language and literacy across the curriculum is variable from subject to subject, is satisfactory overall, but there is room for further improvement in writing skills. Pupils' skills were very well developed in one art lesson where pupils were asked to evaluate their own and each other's work. Their questions were probing and the answers demonstrated good speaking and listening skills. Information and communication technology is put to good effect in some lessons to develop pupils' literacy skills, but computers in classrooms are not used often enough. There are good examples of literacy skills being used in history, but it is inconsistent.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**. Standards in Years 2 and 6 are **above average** and pupils' achievement is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- the rising standards in Years 3 to 6.
- pupils accuracy and recall of multiplication facts.
- the teaching methods which make learning fun.
- the use of information and communication technology to support learning.
- too much reliance on worksheets, particularly in infant classes.
- inconsistency in the marking of pupils' work.

Commentary

52. The school has analysed and tracked pupils' performance and found the underlying causes for the slow improvement in standards in Years 3 to 6 in recent years and has taken action to remedy them. The full impact of the action taken to raise standards from well below the national average is now beginning to show, particularly in the proportion of pupils reaching the higher level 5, as teachers' expectations have been raised. In the 2003 national tests the proportion of pupils reaching the higher level rose by 11 percentage points and was close to the national average, a notable improvement over the results in 2002. The school is on course to achieve its target of 85 percent of pupils reaching the expected level 4 and 25 percent reaching the higher level and may exceed the targets if the current good progress continues. The introduction of a computer program in Years 5 and 6 to develop pupils' skills has been a key factor in the rising standards. Pupils are allocated a time to use the computers either before school or at lunchtime, their performance is assessed and the tasks carefully matched to individual needs. Pupils enjoy the activities and are keen to succeed. Problem solving skills have also been an area of focus for improvement and there was evidence in lessons of pupils' increased confidence in tackling such questions.
53. The emphasis on practical activities and games for pupils in Years 1 and 2, building on the work in the Foundation Stage has been a key factor in the standards achieved in recent years. In 2000 and 2001, standards were well above the national average. The decline in standards in 2003 does not indicate any significant weaknesses in the provision, but a year group with a lower attainment profile, which was evident in their attainment on entry.

However, there is too much reliance on pupils recording their work on worksheets, which hinders their ability to record their work independently in their preferred way. Time given to developing pupils' skills in mental calculations at the start of lessons is used effectively, often involving good use of mathematical vocabulary and challenging pupils to think for themselves. In Year 2, for example, pupils were challenged to work out the mystery number from information given by classmates. All pupils had to frame their sentences carefully so as not to give the number away. By making the activities into challenges for individuals or groups learning is more fun as pupils try hard to beat the challenge. Pupils' skills in mental calculations are developing well and their knowledge and understanding of two and three-dimensional shapes and their properties are good for their age. They can estimate and measure in centimetres and metres with a good degree of accuracy.

54. Teaching and learning are good throughout, but with an example of unsatisfactory teaching seen. Teachers use mathematical vocabulary accurately in lessons and expect pupils to do the same. The teaching assistants have been trained to use additional national materials to support any pupil falling behind and this is helping selected pupils to make better progress in their learning. Teaching assistants provide very valuable support for pupils in lessons, questioning and supporting them but not doing their work for them. In many lessons, teachers incorporate mathematical games to reinforce new work and make learning fun. The recent purchase of interactive whiteboards also makes lessons more interesting as national materials can be accessed and displayed so all pupils can test out their ideas, for example in Year 6, when estimating the size of acute or obtuse angles to within five degrees of accuracy. Good emphasis is placed on encouraging pupils to learn their multiplication tables and again this is made fun through games such as 'Beat the Clock', or using small boards to record answers and showing them to the teacher. Teachers assess pupils' learning and attainment in lessons and amend their lessons accordingly where necessary. This helps ensure the activities set meet the needs of all pupils, a key factor in enabling all pupils to achieve as well as they can. The weakness in teaching is in the inconsistent marking of pupils' work. In some classes work is marked carefully and targets for improvement set, while in others marking only gives praise or is merely ticks. Unsatisfactory teaching in Year 1 resulted from the failure to keep all pupils involved by directing questions towards pupils not participating and average attaining pupils being unsure of what they had to do and were, therefore, unable to work independently.
55. The subject is well led and managed, thorough analysis of pupils' performance is undertaken to determine where further improvement can be made. Monitoring of teaching by the co-ordinator identified underachievement among higher attaining pupils and this has been remedied through the provision of extension activities. Overall improvement since the previous inspection has been good.

Mathematics across the curriculum

56. While pupils use their mathematical skills in other subjects, they could be promoted further. In science, pupils often use their knowledge and skills to record the outcomes of their investigations, or when measuring accurately. Timelines in history are used, for example, to determine the lengths of different periods, or how long kings and queens reigned. In geography pupils calculate distances between different locations and collect data on favourite pastimes as part of their local studies. There was very little evidence in design and technology or in other subjects.

SCIENCE

Provision in science **is good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school's results and performance have improved and are now above average. Pupil's achievement is good.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- Literacy and numeracy skills are developed effectively through the teaching of science, particularly speaking and listening skills.
- Teaching assistants are very well deployed and support pupils' learning effectively.
- Sometimes activities lack sufficient challenge for higher attaining pupils.

Commentary

57. Teachers' assessments of pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 in 2002 showed standards to be above the national average both at the level expected for their age and at the higher level. Their investigative skills were well above average. At the end of Year 6, standards in 2002 were below the national average and well below those of similar schools. There was notable improvement in standards in Year 6 in 2003, both at the expected level and the higher level.
58. Current standards of work are above average and well above in Year 2 and achievement is good. Pupils have a good level of knowledge and well-developed investigative skills. The improvement in standards is partly due to teaching that is well planned, and lesson introductions that capture the pupils' interest well. Pupils' attitudes to the subject are consistently good due to the interesting and motivating teaching, the creative curricular links and emphasis on practical activities. However, in one lesson seen in Year 6 independent activities did not challenge higher attaining pupils sufficiently and an opportunity to extend the learning of those pupils was missed. Pupils with special educational needs, or with English as an additional language are well supported and fully included in lessons. Marking is inconsistent, at its best pupils are challenged through pertinent questioning. Activities devised in partnership with the local Technology College provide good opportunities for pupils to consolidate and extend their understanding of science concepts. For example, Year 5 pupils worked collaboratively in groups when constructing an electrical circuit suitable for use on a buggy. Activities promoting the development of literacy skills, in particular speaking and listening skills are planned for and enhance pupils' understanding. In a Year 2 lesson role-play was used very effectively to consolidate pupils' knowledge of how medicines can be helpful. Monitoring of standards is effective, but no specific targets for improvement are set for individual pupils. Satisfactory resources for learning are available and the subject co-ordinator is knowledgeable and therefore well placed to support the further development of science throughout the school. Overall improvement since the previous inspection has been good.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Overall teaching is now good as teachers and many teaching assistants have good subject knowledge.
- Interactive whiteboards are used effectively to support pupils' learning.
- Computers are used outside the school day to help pupils develop their mathematical skills.
- The computers in classrooms could be used more extensively in other subjects, particularly in Years 3 to 6.

Commentary

59. Standards in Years 2 and 6 are average, which is a good improvement from the below average standards found at the time of the previous inspection. A fire in the computer suite last year caused extensive damage and hindered the development of pupils' skills, but this

has been fully remedied. Pupils' achievement is good in Years 1 and 2 and is satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. The good improvement in standards and provision since the previous inspection has resulted from the additional training undertaken by all staff to improve their skills and knowledge and consequently their confidence in teaching the subject. The purchase of digital projectors and interactive whiteboards has been another key factor in raising standards as teachers can give clear explanations of how to access programs and steps to follow, showing pupils what the screen will look like on their monitor. The purchase of laptop computers for use in mobile classrooms ensures all pupils have equal access to machines in order to develop their skills.

60. Computers are frequently in use in infant classes and pupils' keyboard skills develop well. By Year 2, they can edit text in order to improve it, for example, by inserting punctuation and deleting unwanted words. Pupils enter their passwords and access their work confidently and know how to save it. They become confident in investigating programs, creating graphic pictures and word processing their work to present it attractively.
61. In Year 6, pupils have created their own multi-media presentations, for example, about the work in the school. Pupils considered who their audience would be and took this into consideration when planning their slides. Some of the presentations were of good quality, combining sound effects to add impact for the viewer as text appeared on the screen. All aspects of the National Curriculum are covered and pupils gain the knowledge, understanding and skills expected by the end of Year 6 and a significant minority exceed this level, often due to having access to computers at home and practising new skills they have learned in school. Better use could be made of the computers in classrooms to enable pupils to reach their full potential in all subjects.
62. Teaching and learning are good, enabling pupils to catch up after the loss of the computers in the suite last year. Information sheets are provided for pupils when necessary so they can check the procedures for operating software and do not waste time waiting for support from their teacher. Teaching assistants play an excellent role in supporting pupils and teachers because of their good level of knowledge and confidence in explaining how to proceed when problems arise. Activities are usually well matched to the needs of individual pupils, enabling them to make good progress in the development of their skills.
63. Leadership and management of the subject are good, the co-ordinator being a driving force behind the improvement since the previous inspection. Assessment procedures have been implemented and are currently being revised to make them more manageable and to involve pupils further in their own assessment.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

64. While there is evidence of the use of information and communication technology in most other subjects, there is room for further improvement in the use of computers in classrooms. Computers are used in history, geography and religious education to research information using the Internet or CD Roms. In mathematics pupils improve the accuracy and speed of recall of number facts and their ability to recognise and name shapes accurately. Results of investigations in science are presented in charts and graphs. Pupils compose music using computer programs and investigate the use of cams in design and technology. In art and design pupils create graphic pictures and repeat patterns to produce designs. Good cross-curricular links between history, information and communication technology and English in Year 4 led to pupils writing letters from Henry VIII to a friend explaining why he should marry Catherine of Aragon.

HUMANITIES

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Two lessons were seen, one each in Years 4, and 6. No lessons were seen in Years 1 and 2. Inspection evidence includes samples of pupils' earlier work and teachers' planning.

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Above average standards and very good teaching in lessons seen.
- Excellent teaching and learning in a Year 4 lesson.
- The good links with spiritual and moral development.

Commentary

65. The school follows the Staffordshire agreed syllabus for religious education. Standards by the end of Year 2 are in line with those expected and by the end of Year 6 they rise above those expected. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection because the subject is well led and managed and assessment procedures have been implemented effectively to track pupils' progress and attainment.
66. Pupils in Years 4 and 6 can speak confidently and articulately about their views of religious education. Through work on other cultures the pupils competently compare principles in different religions. The pupils show a high level of maturity in discussions and this successfully widens their knowledge and understanding. Good teaching stimulates pupils' thinking and encourages them to explore difficult issues such as the 'Noble Eight Fold Path' in Buddhism. Challenging questions led the pupils effectively to make links with previous learning. Discussions contribute well to the pupils' spiritual development and in understanding the need for codes to live by.

Example of outstanding practice

In an excellent lesson focused on 'Peace', inspirational teaching totally engaged the pupils' full attention. As pupils observed a quiet country scene displayed on the interactive whiteboard they listened to calming music. The teacher invited pupils to share their thoughts on what peace meant to them. Because the teacher had generated this spiritual and peaceful atmosphere the pupils contributed their ideas in a serious yet warm and friendly way. The teacher then skilfully reminded the pupils of the work in previous lessons linked to Martin Luther King's speech; 'I had a dream'. Pupils were then challenged to explain what was meant by the term, 'Peace in our hands'. The teacher and pupils read three prayers together and used their understanding of peace to explain the meaning of the prayers. This excellent introductory work fully prepared pupils for the task to write a 'Peace Prayer'. The pupils were eager to do this including those pupils with special needs who had the support of an adult and a framework for writing. All pupils worked hard and the results of their efforts were impressive. Examples include, "I pray that wherever anyone goes in the world they will feel welcomed" and "Helping each other in our own way to find peace each day". This excellent lesson concluded as pupils, holding hands in a circle passed peace around by squeezing hands. "I can feel that," said the teacher with a warm smile on her face.

History and geography

One lesson was observed in history in Year 6 and three lessons in geography in Years 2, 3, and 5. Inspection evidence includes the scrutiny of pupils' previous work, teachers' planning and discussions.

Provision in history is **good** and in geography is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Above average standards in history by the end of Year 6.
- Effective cross-curricular links make lessons more interesting.
- Good use of resources for learning, except for computers which could be used more often.
- Insufficient challenge in some activities in geography.

Commentary

67. Standards in geography and history are average at the end of Year 2 and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. By Year 6, standards rise above average in history, as pupils achieve well, but remain broadly average in geography, where there are pockets of underachievement due to insufficient challenge in the activities provided and overall achievement is satisfactory.
68. In history, no overall judgement on teaching could be made due to insufficient evidence, but in the lesson seen it was very good. Pupils worked with enthusiasm, showing a keen interest and a reluctance to stop working. Pupils' speaking and listening skills were very well developed when individual pupils informed the class what a day in the life, for example, of a pharaoh might be like. Other pupils asked relevant questions showing good awareness and knowledge of the period. Good cross-curricular links enrich learning, for example, pupils used their knowledge of Tudor designs and paintings when decorating frames for their Tudor portraits. Pupils have good understanding of how to combine information from different sources, evident in their study of Ancient Egyptians. Visits and visitors to the school to lead special history days add further interest and bring history to life as pupils participate in pastimes of the period and gain deeper understanding of life at that time.
69. Teaching and learning in geography are satisfactory throughout the school. Lesson introductions are enhanced through the use of interactive whiteboards, for example in Year 2, where the pupils were captivated by seeing the famous landmarks of Paris skilfully introduced by the teacher using imported images. All pupils were interested in their activities and those with special educational needs achieved well. The very good lesson seen in Year 2 provided good opportunities for pupils to develop skills in numeracy and information and communication technology. Field trips and residential visits are used well to support pupils' learning.
70. The leadership and management of history are good, of geography are satisfactory. Assessment procedures have been implemented in both subjects and are manageable. Monitoring of teaching and learning takes place through the scrutiny of pupils' work and areas for improvement incorporated into the school improvement plan.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Two lessons in art and design, one lesson in design and technology, three lessons in music and in physical education were seen. Inspection evidence includes a scrutiny of previous work on display, photographic evidence and discussions. No judgements on standards and teaching could be made in design and technology as insufficient evidence was available.

Art and design, design and technology, music and physical education

Provision in art and design is **very good**, in music, design and technology and physical education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Well above average standards in art and design in Years 2 and 6 as pupils achieve well.
- The development of gymnastic skills in physical education.
- The very good use of resources, and emphasis on developing pupils' skills in composing music, leading to above average standards in Year 2.

Commentary

71. In art and design, pupils have good opportunities to explore and use a wide range of materials and they achieve well. The pupils' artwork is celebrated throughout the school, with framed examples hung in areas close to the main entrance. Examples of work by famous artists, such as Renoir, Cezanne, Van Gogh, Warhol and Lowry were displayed to form a mini art gallery to inspire pupils. Year 2 pupils have produced very good charcoal drawings of the Eiffel Tower, showing good control and attention to design and shape. They have studied impressionist painters and have experimented with different techniques. Year 1 pupils have produced a very striking wall hanging woven from materials reflecting warm autumn colours. In Year 6, pupils produced beautifully decorated Egyptian designs, linked to a history topic. The subject is very well led and managed by an 'Advanced Skills' teacher for creativity who monitors standards throughout the school. There has been good improvement in the provision since the previous inspection.
72. Pupils' achievement in music is good in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. Standards in singing, a weakness at the time of the last inspection, have improved and are average by the end of Year 6. Current standards are above average in Year 2, owing to the good overall teaching and examples of excellent teaching by the headteacher.

Example of outstanding practice

Excellent teaching and learning in music in Year 2 resulted from detailed planning of a range of activities which kept the lesson moving at a very good pace and involved singing, listening and performing. Very clear routines have been established for selecting instruments, so no time is wasted and all pupils are actively participating for much of the time. Pupils worked with a partner to create a graphic score using symbols to represent long and short sounds. The teacher gave each pair a different number of long and short sounds to be incorporated into their final composition, so was able to assess the level of understanding of graphic notation for each pair of pupils. The pupils enjoyed joining in the singing, especially in two parts and in passing body rhythms round the class group, which meant they had to watch and think very carefully. Pupils with special educational needs and with English as an additional language were fully included in all the activities and able to lead groups in singing and performing. The teacher had high expectations of pupils' behaviour and efforts and they all rose to the challenge.

73. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory, but is good in the extra-curricular activities. The main difference in the teaching is the time taken to give out instruments, because of the cramped conditions, and this slows the pace of lessons for a time. Standards by the end of Year 6 are average, but rise above for many of those involved in extra-curricular activities, and who learn to read music confidently. The subject is well led and managed.
74. In physical education standards are average in Year 6 and achievement is satisfactory, no lessons were seen in infant classes. There was some evidence of good standards in gymnastics in Year 3 and in dance in one of the Year 6 classes. In Year 3, pupils used their skills practised in floor work well when using the apparatus. The pupils improved their abilities to follow a sequence of movements because the teacher closely observed pupils and gave guidance on how to improve the movement sequence. Pupils showed good awareness of health and safety rules. In a very good dance lesson in Year 6, pupils achieved well because they worked hard in small groups to improve their dance performance. Pupils evaluated the work of other groups and confidently made constructive comments. The pupils' performance further improved because the teacher had very good knowledge of dance and worked with

the pupils sometimes demonstrating movements and encouraging good practice. The final performance was of a high standard. There are some inconsistencies in standards in Year 6 mainly as a result of a lack of subject knowledge, particularly in dance. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP (PSHE)

Provision in personal, social and health education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The policy statement is good.
- The subject is taught in every class from nursery to Year 6.
- Focused learning packs are available to support the themes.

Commentary

75. The school's high commitment to developing the pupils personal, social and health education is clearly guided by a worthwhile policy. The policy informs teachers planning and ensures skills are continuously developed through appropriate themes. The policy ensures that pupils receive appropriate teaching in respect of sex education, drugs awareness and inter-personal skills. In PSHE lessons there is always a clear focus for discussion, for example, 'How can disagreements be sorted out?' These provide a high level of challenge for pupils to address. Good links are made with religious education and social and moral development. Focused learning packs provide resources to promote progression in the pupils' knowledge and skills. There is a high focus on decision making skills and extensive opportunities to help the pupils to make informed decisions.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
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	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	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	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	2
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	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	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	1
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	1

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