

INSPECTION REPORT

Christ Church CE (C) First School
Stone

LEA area : Staffordshire

Unique Reference Number : 124293

Headteacher : Mrs. L. Croxall

Reporting inspector : Mr. P. Belfield
21661

Dates of inspection : 4th – 7th October 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707792m

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school :	First
Type of control :	Controlled
Age range of pupils :	4 - 9
Gender of pupils :	Mixed
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Appropriate authority :	Governors
Name of chair of governors :	Mr. J. Brewer
Date of previous inspection :	November 1995

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
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	English	Teaching
	Information technology	Leadership and management
	History	Efficiency
	Geography	
	Physical Education	
	Special Educational Needs	
Mr. T. Anderson, Lay Inspector		Attendance
		Support, guidance and pupils' welfare
		Partnership with parents and the community
		Staffing, accommodation and learning resources
Mrs. L. Short	Mathematics	Attitudes, behaviour and personal development
	Science	Curriculum and Assessment
	Religious Education	Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
	Art	
	Design and technology	
	Music	
	Equal Opportunities	

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REPORT CONTENTS

Paragraph

MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well
Where the school has weaknesses
How the school has improved since the last inspection
Standards in subjects
Quality of teaching
Other aspects of the school
The parents' views of the school

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

INTRODUCTION

1 - 2

Characteristics of the school
Key indicators

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Educational standards achieved by pupils at the school

3 - 12

Attainment and progress
Attitudes, behaviour and personal development
Attendance

Quality of education provided

13 - 35

Teaching
The curriculum and assessment
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
Support, guidance and pupils' welfare
Partnership with parents and the community

The management and efficiency of the school

36 - 46

Leadership and management
Staffing, accommodation and learning resources
The efficiency of the school

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

Areas of learning for children under five

47 - 54

English, mathematics and science

55 - 79

Other subjects or courses

80 - 114

PART C: INSPECTION DATA

Summary of inspection evidence

115

Data and indicators

116

MAIN FINDINGS

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

- . Standards in English, mathematics, science and information technology have improved significantly since the last inspection and are set to improve further.
- . The teaching is very good. The teachers are enthusiastic and are very clear about what they expect the pupils to learn.
- . The school has a very good ethos; the pupils behave extremely well and they have a very good attitude to their work.
- . The headteacher provides high quality leadership; the staff are committed to improving standards.
- . The school provides very good opportunities for the pupils to develop strong moral values, broaden their social skills, and extend their spiritual awareness.
- . The assessment procedures are very thorough and used very effectively by teachers to plan future work.
- . Relationships are very good and a high level of care is extended to all pupils.
- . The provision for pupils with special needs is excellent and it is very carefully planned. The pupils make very good progress.
- . The school has very effective links with the local community and works very closely with parents to improve the quality of learning for the pupils.

WHERE THE SCHOOL HAS WEAKNESSES

1. More resources are needed for those pupils who are under five in the Reception class to ensure that a wider range of activities can be provided in lessons.
2. More opportunities need to be provided for the pupils to pose their own questions in science and to use the library to carry out research for themselves.

Christ Church First School is a very good school and it has many outstanding features. The weaknesses are far outweighed by what the school does well, but they will form the basis of the governors' action plan which will be sent to all parents and carers of pupils at the school.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE THE LAST INSPECTION

The school has made very good progress since the last inspection. The headteacher has implemented very effective procedures to monitor teaching and learning and this has led to a significant improvement in the quality of teaching. The standards of attainment in mathematics and information technology across the school and science in Key Stage 1 have improved. There has been a thorough review of the assessment of the pupils' progress and the teachers make very good use of these assessments to plan their lessons. These improvements, combined with the headteacher's clear vision of what she wants for all of the pupils at the school ensures that the school is well placed to make further improvements and to meet its targets.

STANDARDS IN SUBJECTS

The table shows the standards achieved by 7 year olds in 1999 based on the National Curriculum tests:

Performance in	Compared with all schools	Compared with similar schools	Key <i>well above average</i> <i>above average</i> <i>average</i> C <i>below average</i> D <i>well below average</i> E	
Reading	B	B		
Writing	A	A		
Mathematics	B	C		

These results relate to pupils who took the tests last year. Standards are improving. Inspection evidence confirms this picture of high attainment in writing and finds that the steps taken to improve reading have raised standards in reading considerably. The pupils' attainment in the current Year 2 is above average in reading and mathematics and average in science and information technology. The progress made by pupils in Key Stage 1 is good and this rate of progress increases in Years 3 and 4 with attainment in English, mathematics and science being well above average by the time the pupils leave the school. The children who are under five make good progress overall and are likely to reach the desirable learning outcomes by five years of age in all of the areas of learning. Across the school the pupils make good progress in religious education and their attainment by the end of Key Stage 1 is above the expectations in the locally agreed syllabus. The progress made by those pupils with special educational needs is very good.

QUALITY OF TEACHING

Teaching in:	Under 5	5 - 7 years	7 - 11 years
English	Good	Good	Very good
Mathematics	Good	Good	Very good
Science		Good	Very good
Information technology		Good	Very good
Religious education		Good	Very good
Other subjects	Satisfactory	Good	Very good

The quality of the teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection. Overall, the teaching in the school is very good. In half of the lessons, the teaching was very good or excellent. It was good in 13 per cent of lessons and satisfactory in 30 per cent of lessons. In 5 per cent of lessons teaching was unsatisfactory. The very good teaching is the major factor in driving up standards.

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that strengths outweigh any weaknesses.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
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Behaviour	The pupils are very responsive in lessons and their behaviour is very good. They are respectful of each other and adults and enjoy taking responsibility.
Attendance	Well above the national average.
Ethos*	The headteacher, with the support of the governors and staff, creates a very good ethos that strongly supports achievement and learning.
Leadership and management	The school is very well led and managed. The headteacher, senior staff and governors are extremely good in analysing the school's strengths and weaknesses and in deciding what needs to be done to raise standards and to improve the school.
Curriculum	The content, planning and organisation of the curriculum is very good. The teachers are clear about what the pupils should learn. As a result, standards have improved in all classes.
Pupils with special educational needs	There is a very good level of classroom and individual support for pupils and they make very good progress in improving their basic skills.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	A notable strength of the school. Exciting lessons and the concern of teachers to introduce the children to new ideas, contribute very effectively to the spiritual, moral and social development of each pupil. Cultural development is good.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	The staff and governors work as a team. The buildings are cramped but the curriculum is delivered effectively. The resources for those pupils who are under five are inadequate.
Value for money	Standards have improved; the quality of education is very good; the headteacher has a clear vision for the school's development and the teaching is very good. The school gives very good value for money.

* *Ethos is the climate for learning: attitudes to work, relationships and the commitment to high standards.*

The parents' views of the school

What most parents like about the school	What some parents are not happy about
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They feel encouraged to play an active part in the life of the school. • They find the staff approachable. • The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on their children. • They feel that their children achieve high standards in their work. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school achieves high standards of good behaviour. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were no concerns of any significance expressed by the parents.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

In order to further raise standards and improve the quality of education provided the school should:

1. Increase the range of resources for those pupils who are under five and ensure that the teacher's planning for these children provides a wider range of activities.
(paragraphs 11, 16, 20, 41, 42, 45, 48, 50, 52, 53 and 54)

2. Provide more opportunities for the pupils to pose their own questions in science and to use the library to carry out research for themselves.
(paragraphs 11, 18, 57, 75, 77 and 103)

INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the school

1. Christ Church CE Voluntary Controlled First School is situated close to the centre of the town of Stone in Staffordshire. There are 122 pupils on roll. 16% pupils are eligible for free school meals which is broadly average. Eighteen pupils are identified as having special educational needs with 3 pupils having a statement. This is broadly average. There are no pupils on roll for whom English is an additional language. The majority of the pupils come from the area around the school which is largely a mixture of council and privately owned terraced housing. Some pupils come from other areas of the town. The baseline assessment information shows that when the children enter the school they are below average. The majority of children are admitted into the Reception class on a part-time basis in the term after their fourth birthday, or, full-time at the beginning of the academic year if their birthday falls between 31st March and 1st September.

2. Key Indicators

Attainment at Key Stage 1¹

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1
for latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	14	16	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or Above	Boys	11	11	13
	Girls	15	15	15
	Total	26	26	28
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	87(96)	87(92)	93(96)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (85)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or Above	Boys	11	13	12
	Girls	15	15	15
	Total	26	28	27
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	87(96)	93(96)	90(96)
	National	82(81)	86(85)	86(85)

Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) Missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year			%
Authorised Absence	School		3.8
	National comparative data		5.7
Unauthorised Absence	School		0
	National comparative data		0.5

Exclusions

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:			Number
Fixed period			0
Permanent			0

Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is :			%
Very good or better			51
Satisfactory or better			95
Less than satisfactory			5

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

Attainment and progress

3. Recent benchmark data and the results of national tests in 1999 indicate that the performance of the pupils at age seven in writing is well above the national average. In reading and mathematics is above the national average. Taking the three years 1997 to 1999 together, the figures in reading and mathematics are consistently above average and in writing consistently well above average. When looking at these results in comparison with the performance of pupils in similar schools, standards in writing are well above average, in reading well above and in mathematics in line with those found in schools with pupils from similar backgrounds.
4. Inspection evidence confirms this picture of high attainment in writing and finds that the steps taken to improve reading have raised standards in reading considerably. The pupils' attainment in the current Year 2 is above average in reading and mathematics and average in science and information technology. The progress made by pupils in Key Stage 1 is good and this rate of progress increases in Years 3 and 4 with attainment in English, mathematics and science being well above average by the time the pupils leave the school. The children who are under five make good progress overall and are likely to reach the desirable learning outcomes by five years of age in all of the areas of learning. Across the school the pupils make good progress in religious education and their attainment by the end of Key Stage 1 is above the expectations in the locally agreed syllabus. The progress made by those pupils with special educational needs is very good.
5. There has been a significant improvement in standards since the last inspection. In most subjects this is due to the high quality curriculum planning which has been put in place and the very good assessment procedures which now ensure that the teachers plan from a clear assessment of what the pupils already know.
6. In English, the pupils are enthusiastic readers and across the school they make good progress. The pupils in Key Stage 1 quickly develop an appropriate sight vocabulary and can use phonic, picture and context cues when they are reading. By the end of Key Stage 1 the pupils have a range of appropriate skills which enable them to have a good understanding of the books they are required to read. They are developing as fluent readers and are able to talk confidently about the characters and settings for stories. Reading is well taught with individual progress monitored carefully by teachers. This good progress in reading has a positive influence in other areas of the curriculum and by the time the pupils leave the school they are confident readers and writers. Their independent writing is of a high standard. In Key Stage 1 the pupils' handwriting is legible and clear. By the end of Year 4 their knowledge of grammar and their use of punctuation is very well developed and many pupils set their work out in paragraphs. These strengths in literacy are also reflected in numeracy. The pupils are able to confidently carry out accurate mental calculations. At the end of Key Stage 1 the pupils have a good understanding of place value, have a good knowledge of shape and use appropriate mathematical language. The pupils make very good progress in Key Stage 2 and by the time they leave the school they can calculate to thousands using the four rules of number, including decimals. They use a range of strategies to solve problems and are improving their quick recall of multiplication tables and adding and subtracting of numbers mentally. They can apply mathematics in other subjects by recording results of their investigations in charts and graphs, through time lines in history and the use of direction and coordinates in geography.
7. Standards in subjects other than English and mathematics are at least in line with national

expectations or higher. The pupils in Key Stage 1 are making satisfactory progress in all aspects of scientific knowledge and understanding but their investigative skills are underdeveloped. The rate of progress quickens in Years 3 and 4. As a result, by the time the pupils leave the school, the majority are attaining standards that are well above average. In information technology, where standards were found to be below average in the previous inspection, the pupils' attainment is now average and they are making satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1 and good progress in Key Stage 2. In other subjects, high standards are achieved in art, geography and history.

Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

8. The pupils enjoy coming to school and they are eager to learn. Almost all parents agreed that the school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on the children. They are right to do so. The pupils' very good attitudes are seen in most lessons for children under five and throughout the school. In all classes, the pupils demonstrate high levels of interest, concentration and enthusiasm and this, together with their very good behaviour, creates a purposeful community in which everyone is valued and high standards can be achieved. The pupils take pride in the presentation of their work. They share resources well and take turns in group activities. The very positive response by pupils to the school's high expectations of behaviour and work habits, results in a very positive learning environment that greatly contributes to their academic and personal progress.
9. There is a close link between the quality of teaching and the quality of the pupils' response. Stimulating teaching captures pupils' interest and they demonstrate high levels of enthusiasm for the lessons that their teachers have planned. The pupils listen well and are eager to answer questions and express their views and experiences. They concentrate willingly and complete their work. On the occasions when the teaching is less inspiring the pupils' attitudes, although less enthusiastic, are still positive and they want to learn. The pupils with special educational needs show very positive attitudes in lessons and cope very well in small groups and whole class situations and receive very good support from class teachers and support staff.
10. The pupils' behaviour is very good and has improved significantly since the last inspection. They move in and around the school in a very orderly way and know what is expected of them. The pupils are courteous and friendly to each other and visitors and they are trustworthy. There have been no exclusions in the past year. They are confident and interested when talking to adults. Girls and boys interact well and work well together in groups. They listen carefully to each other during class discussions and when they spontaneously clap when a pupil has achieved well in the lesson.
11. The pupils' personal development is satisfactory. Many pupils are able to use their initiative, although in many lessons they have too little opportunity to make decisions or to organise their own learning. There are too few opportunities provided for the pupils to pose their own questions in science and to use the library to carry out research for themselves. The children under five have settled quickly into school routines and show confidence when working and playing together. However the planning and organisation of activities does not always provide sufficient opportunities for the children to develop their confidence and ability in selecting activities and equipment for themselves. In Key Stages 1 and 2 classroom monitors carry out their jobs reliably and contribute to the smooth running of the class. In the playground older pupils organise and play games, collecting and putting out sports equipment without the need for close supervision. They put it away again at the end of playtimes. The oldest pupils carry out responsibilities across the school, such as collecting and returning registers and money to the office, setting up the hall and clearing away after lunch.

Attendance

12. Pupils' attendance at the school is consistently good and there is no evidence of any unauthorised absence.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

Teaching

13. The quality of teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection and is now very good. There is now little evidence of pupils underachieving. This has been the key to raising standards since the last inspection and has resulted in the good and very good progress made by the pupils in most of the lessons. The key skills of reading, writing and number are taught well. The teachers are enthusiastic about their work and communicate this to the pupils. Five per cent of teaching is unsatisfactory. The teaching of those pupils with special educational needs is carefully planned with very clear learning targets based on regular assessment that ensures that the pupils make very good progress. Ninety-five percent of the teaching is satisfactory or better and it is good, very good or excellent in 65 per cent of lessons.
14. Where the teaching is at its best, the teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the subjects they are required to teach and this is demonstrated in the range and the quality of the work that is produced by pupils. The teacher's planning is thorough and detailed. Lesson plans are carefully linked to the school's schemes of work. They build very successfully on previous work and the pupils are given challenging tasks. The teachers organise pupils in a variety of ways, but most lessons begin with carefully directed whole class teaching. This is followed by small group and individual work. The pupils are required to work at an appropriate pace and the teachers make it clear to them what they are going to learn.
15. The quality of the teaching in Years 1, 3 and 4 is very good and the pupils make very good progress in these lessons. These teachers have very high expectations; relationships are warm and humour is used to good effect. In Years 3 and 4, subjects such as history and geography are brought alive with exciting tasks that involve the pupils in re-enacting a battle on Hadrian's Wall and exploring supermarket foods to trace the country of origin and why it has to be imported. Drama is used to very good effect in history that enables the pupils to relate with events from the past. The teachers target their questions at individual pupils to consolidate, extend and verify what the pupils know and understand.
16. The quality of teaching of those pupils who are under five overall is good. The teacher and the nursery nurse work hard to provide an appropriate range of learning activities for the children. However, a lack of resources and the cramped accommodation results in a limited range of activities being provided and too few opportunities for the children to select activities and equipment for themselves. The teacher's lesson planning does not indicate clearly what the children are to learn from activities which are not directly taught by an adult. The staff have good questioning skills and give a high priority to the development of the children's language and numeracy and to developing positive attitudes to learning.
17. The teachers have been keen to implement the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Across the school, the pupils are confident and enjoy the interactive word work in the Literacy Hour and develop their skills of rapid mental calculation in mathematics. The lessons follow the structure of the Literacy and Numeracy Hour and they are well planned. In the best lessons there is a large amount of whole class interactive teaching. The teachers communicate clearly to the pupils what

they expect them to learn and specify the amount of time in which the work will be done. The group work is usually well suited to the pupils' abilities and the well resourced tasks had a clear focus for learning. The transitions between the different parts of the lesson were handled well.

18. The teachers know their pupils well. Assessment opportunities are clearly indicated in lesson plans and many of the lesson plans are revised to take account of these assessments. The school is aware of the need to provide more opportunities for investigative work in science and to provide more opportunities for the pupils to carry out research for themselves.

The curriculum and assessment

19. The curriculum is broad and balanced and the school plans to cover all subjects of the National Curriculum, religious education, sex education and drugs education.
20. A sound curriculum is provided for children under five. It is planned appropriately to cover the recommended areas of learning for this age group and to prepare them for Key Stage 1 of the National Curriculum. However, a lack of resources and the cramped accommodation limits the number of activities that can be provided during each session. There is very little equipment for outdoor play.
21. In Key Stage 1 and 2 a very good curriculum framework is supported by comprehensive schemes of work that make reference to the key concepts, knowledge and skills that the pupils should learn. These are linked to clear assessment procedures. The curriculum provides for high achievement which results in standards being well above average by the time the pupils leave the school. The school has very successfully addressed the issues identified in the last inspection when weaknesses were found in the provision for information technology and design and technology. The close monitoring of teaching and the quality of the pupils' learning has been directly responsible for the raising of standards in English and mathematics across the school. The teachers' plans are detailed and clearly state what pupils are to learn. The staff work closely together to ensure continuity and progression and this results in very good planning for progression over both key stages. The school's strategy for literacy and numeracy is very good. As part of the English and mathematics curriculum, there are daily literacy and numeracy sessions in each class. These are having a very positive impact on pupils' learning. Planning for these is drawing on the national guidelines as well as the school's own schemes of work. Opportunities for developing the pupils' skills in English and mathematics in other subjects are well used and indicated in the teachers' plans.
22. The curriculum is very effective in promoting the pupils' intellectual development but it is not as successful in developing their independent learning. Emphasis is placed on the acquisition of factual knowledge and skill development, although much of the investigative work, particularly in science, is teacher directed and there are few opportunities for pupils to decide their own lines and methods of enquiry. The school has excellent links with the local community and businesses to enrich the curriculum. The pupils have taken part in local projects such as making a time capsule in conjunction with a new supermarket and working with the local newspaper. Visits to local museums and environmental centres, enhance the work in science, geography and history. Homework is provided for all pupils in the school and supports and extends the teaching and learning. The school provides a good programme of extra-curricular activities including music and sport for pupils in Key Stage 2.
23. Excellent provision is made for pupils with special educational needs. The school follows the recommendations of the Code of Practice and pupils' individual educational plans have specific targets for learning, which are reviewed and revised regularly. Additional adult support is given in

lessons and pupils with statements of special educational need receive very good quality extra support. The school uses a computer based integrated learning program for pupils with special educational needs, and these pupils have shown significant gains being made in their attainment in mathematics. The management of this initiative is well organised.

24. The school's assessment procedures are very good. A whole school policy for assessment and recording informs teachers' planning and ensures that work is appropriately matched to the pupils' abilities. This very successfully addresses the issue identified in the previous report when the school did not meet statutory requirements for assessment and recording. Information is recorded on pupils' attainment and progress, including those pupils with special educational needs. Baseline assessment is carried out for children under five and appropriate records are maintained. Statutory National Curriculum test and assessment requirements are met and the school carries out its own regular tests. Teachers record attainment in lessons. The information gained from results is analysed and used very effectively to inform future planning and to identify any areas for development. Individual targets are set for each pupil. Assessment information has been used to inform the grouping of pupils for work in literacy and numeracy. The headteacher monitors assessment and pupils' attainment very closely and this has had a very positive impact on assessment and the pupils' attainment.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

25. This is a strength of the school. The pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development is promoted successfully through the curriculum and in all aspects of school life. The ethos of the school is very good and is consistent with the school's aims.
26. The provision for the pupils' spiritual development is very good. Well planned, purposeful lessons stimulate the pupils' interest and create moments of excitement, for example, when acting out scenes from history, studying world food supplies and when younger pupils discover how to count in tens. The teachers receive and value the pupils' ideas and, through skilful questioning, lead them to think seriously about other people's ideas and beliefs. The pupils experience the joy that comes from singing well or from listening to music of all kinds. The assemblies are very well planned and the pupils are given time for prayer and reflection on the issues that have been discussed. All adults actively set out to develop the pupils' self-esteem and confidence and achievement in all forms is celebrated.
27. The school sets out to teach the principles that distinguish right from wrong and all staff work hard to foster the values of fairness, truth and justice. The quality of relationships within the school is very good and adults and children treat each other with affection, courtesy and respect. The pupils are given opportunities to evaluate their behaviour and to discuss moral issues in curriculum topics. An example of this was in a Year 3 lesson where the pupils expressed shock on discovering that some people lived in 'cardboard city' in England. Parents support the values promoted by the school.
28. The provision for the pupils' social development is very good. The youngest children quickly learn to carry out routine classroom tasks and to work in harmony with others in their group. Everyone is expected to perform duties within the classroom and around the school and older pupils often take responsibility for caring for the younger ones during playtimes and breaks. In all classes, the pupils are encouraged to help each other and work cooperatively on projects and investigations, such as investigating the most effective way for Vikings to preserve their food. After school activities provide opportunities for pupils to cooperate in team games and to compete against other schools in inter-school music festivals and sports. The excellent links with the local community

makes a significant contribution to the pupils' social development.

29. The provision for the pupils' cultural development is good. The pupils have a very good knowledge of local and national culture and traditions and have many opportunities to recreate these, particularly in art, music and drama. Provision for multi-cultural awareness is satisfactory. Pupils learn about other religious beliefs and festivals in religious education, and about the places and the way of life of others in geography, but there are too few opportunities and limited resources to study the diversity and richness of other cultures.

Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

30. The school provides very good support, guidance and welfare for its pupils. This is reflected in the way that pupils conduct themselves in and around the school. The staff know the pupils very well and relationships between staff and pupils are very good. The school provides a very safe and secure environment. There is excellent support for pupils with special educational needs.
31. Procedures for monitoring pupils' academic and personal development are very comprehensive and are efficiently followed by the school. Parents appreciate the two consultations they have with teachers each year and find that the pupil reports tell them about their child's progress. Regular meetings are also held between the Headteacher, teaching and support staff in order to both formally and informally monitor the progress of each child. The procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very good. Monitoring and promoting discipline and good behaviour is seen as the responsibility of all staff and the school's behaviour policy is implemented fairly and consistently. Procedures for promoting and monitoring attendance are very good. The Headteacher's motto for attendance at the school is that "every minute counts" and the actual attendance figures provide abundant evidence of the success of this strategy.
32. The staff are very aware of the Child Protection procedures. There is regular training and the school has very close liaison with outside agencies. Accident procedures are very effective and five staff have first aid qualifications. Health and Safety procedures are comprehensive and the school takes its responsibilities seriously. There are regular inspections of the grounds and buildings and all statutory requirements are met. The very good support, guidance and welfare provided by the school makes a very considerable contribution to the pupil's self-esteem, well-being and achievement.

Partnership with parents and the community

33. The parents' support for the school is very strong. This is well illustrated in their responses at the pre-inspection parents' meeting and in the questionnaires. The school provides very good information to parents in the School Prospectus, in the Annual Report to Parents and in newsletters. The teacher's annual reports on each pupil are well designed and effectively summarise each child's progress and attainment but could be more informative about how children could improve. Briefing sessions for parents such as the recent workshop covering the objectives of the literacy and numeracy hours are very effective in keeping parents informed about their children's education. The importance of regular attendance at the school is also a focus of early meetings with the parents of new children to the school. Governors are involved in the life of the school and parents and other volunteers help with lessons, trips and extra-curricular activities. There is a very active and successful Parent Teacher Association which organises social functions and fund raising events.

34. The school has excellent links with the community an example of which is the design and technology project in the local churchyard in which pupils helped to design and plant a wide range of border flowers. There are very good links with the local playgroup, the supermarket, the library and the police station. Links with industry play a significant part in the school curriculum and a recent design and technology project has been very successful. This project helped the children to understand how some parts of industry use a production line to manufacture goods and this was achieved by creating a production line in the classroom for the assembly of window boxes. Through one of the school's local contacts, a significant link is being forged with another school in the Lancashire town of Oldham and to date, pupils have exchanged letters and E-mails as a means of developing early contact with their new friends. The school is also involved in charity work for deserving causes overseas and existing contacts include Pakistan and Romania. All of the pupils have been involved in providing letters and other artifacts which have been put in a "time capsule" which has been buried under a new local supermarket.
35. The partnership with parents and the community has a very significant impact on the pupils' attainment and progress and it is a major strength of the school.

THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

Leadership and management

36. The headteacher provides very good leadership for the school. With the support of the governors and staff, the headteacher creates an ethos that strongly supports achievement and learning. Since the last inspection she has worked very purposefully to improve the quality of teaching and raise standards. A major focus of the work has been to introduce a very effective system for monitoring teaching and learning and this has led to a significant improvement in the quality of teaching. There has been a thorough review of the content, planning and organisation of the curriculum and how the pupils' learning is assessed; this has ensured good quality direct teaching and a significant improvement in standards in all classes. These improvements, combined with the headteacher's clear vision of what she wants for all of the pupils at the school, both academically and socially, is enabling the school to achieve its aims. All of the issues raised in the last report have been addressed and the school is well placed to make further improvements. There is an improvement in attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 in science and there has been a significant improvement in the standards of attainment in mathematics and information technology across the school. The inspection evidence points to very good progress in Years 1, 3 and 4 with good progress in Reception and Year 2.
37. The headteacher and the deputy headteacher set a very good example through the quality of their own teaching. All of the staff share responsibility for curriculum leadership and their commitment and dedication ensures that curriculum developments are managed very effectively. All teachers are well supported and there is a team approach to all of the school's work. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported. The headteacher who is the co-ordinator provides considerable support for the staff. Individual education plans are clear about what is to be achieved and parents are kept well informed about their child's progress.
38. The school is very well led and managed. The headteacher, staff and governors are extremely good in analysing the school's strengths and weaknesses and in deciding what needs to be done to raise standards and to improve the school. This is effectively promoted through the school's documentation. The school improvement plan is the result of extensive consultation with staff and governors. It is clear and detailed and appropriately identifies the targets for development over a three year period. The evaluation of the plans that have been implemented however are brief and

do not always clearly describe the outcomes of the work that has been undertaken. The governing body plays a very active role in supporting and monitoring development planning and quality assurance. The teachers and governors conduct a regular joint scrutiny of the pupils' work. It is this clear commitment to improvement that underpins the success of so much of the work.

39. The introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy has been very well managed and the involvement as a pilot school for the literacy hour has enabled the teachers to make a very confident start. A review and evaluation of progress is reported regularly to governors. The staff have received training for the introduction of the Numeracy Hour and funds have been set aside for the co-ordinator to teach demonstration lessons. Monitoring and support for teaching and learning is a very significant strength with detailed records kept to ensure the school and subject co-ordinators play a major role in this. They are well supported by the senior management team and the LEA advisory service.

- **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

40. The school has sufficient teachers and support staff. They are a committed and hardworking team who work very well together and share a common purpose. The professional development of staff is very well managed. The appraisal system is used to identify training and development needs and this is carefully linked to the school improvement plan. The Headteacher monitors the quality of teaching and provides written evaluation and targets for improvement.
41. The accommodation provides sufficient space for the numbers of pupils on roll. However, the space for those pupils who are under five is cramped and the facilities for outdoor play are limited. Two classrooms are housed in temporary buildings. They have no running water or toilet facilities. This is inconvenient and results in a loss of teaching time when pupils have to put on outdoor clothing to visit the toilet in the main school building. The accommodation is very well cared for by the by the site management staff and the site is very imaginatively used for effective delivery of the curriculum. The school has the use of the playing fields facilities at the nearby community centre which are used for games and the annual sports day.
42. Learning resources are adequate overall and there has been some improvement in the provision of resources since the last inspection, particularly in the range and availability of computers and in history and geography. However, there are still weaknesses in the provision for those pupils who are under five which needs to be addressed. Recent purchases for the National Literacy Hour mean that teachers have a good range of big books for shared text sessions.

The efficiency of the school

43. The school runs smoothly and effectively and the financial administration is very good.
44. The school benefits from very careful financial planning. The headteacher, assisted by the school administrator, plans the budget very systematically, taking into account all the priorities of the school improvement plan. The governors consider the proposals and set the budget for the forthcoming year. The finances of the school are monitored carefully by the finance and development committee of the governing body and there are internal control systems for monitoring spending.
45. The teaching and support staff are deployed effectively. The teachers are well aware of the strengths and weaknesses in their areas of responsibility. They offer good guidance to their

colleagues. Efficient use is made of staff and resources deployed in support of pupils with special educational needs. Very good use is made of the expertise of the co-ordinator for information technology. The school has well-developed plans for improving the number of computers. The accommodation although cramped is used well. The school has generally adequate resources for the effective delivery of the National Curriculum but the resources for those children who are under five are inadequate. Resources are stored appropriately and they are accessible, within the constraints of security and very limited accommodation. The school has benefited from the recent grants for books and other materials to support literacy.

46. There has been a significant improvement in standards since the last inspection which is due to the very good leadership of the headteacher and the high level of support from the staff, governors and the parents. The high quality curriculum planning which has been put in place and the very good assessment procedures now ensure that the teachers plan from a clear assessment of what the pupils already know. Taking account of the context of the school, pupils' attainment against national averages, their progress and attitudes and the quality of education, the school provides very good value for money.

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

47. The children are admitted to the Reception class at the start of the term they reach five years of age. If their fourth birthday falls between September and January, they have the opportunity to attend on a part-time basis for two terms. If their fourth birthday falls between January and March they then attend for one term part-time. Of the twenty-two children in the class at the time of the inspection, four had reached five years of age. The results of the baseline assessment indicate that the children enter the Reception class with a wide range of attainment but their attainment is generally below average. The children are taught by a teacher and a classroom assistant and they make good progress in language and literacy, mathematics and creative development and satisfactory progress in their personal and social development, knowledge and understanding of the world, and physical development. By the time they are five, most of the children are likely to achieve the Desirable Learning Outcomes.

Personal and social development

48. Good relationships are established between the children, their families and the staff. The daily routines and rules form the basis for developing the children's understanding of the organisation of the school and the wider community. Teaching is sound in this area of learning and the children make satisfactory progress. They develop positive attitudes to learning and good relationships with adults and other children. There is a secure and caring atmosphere where the contributions of all the children are valued. The teacher's use of praise and acknowledgement of the children's good behaviour contribute to the growth of the children's self-esteem. The children listen carefully to the adults and concentrate well on tasks both individually and in groups and the teacher and the nursery nurse plan work that effectively improves the children's concentration. When they make mistakes or, when they do not succeed with tasks, they are encouraged to understand that they cannot always get things right first time and that they should persevere. However, the planning and organization of activities does not always provide sufficient opportunities for the children to select activities for themselves.

Language and literacy

49. The children make good progress in this area of learning. They listen to their teacher for an increasing length of time and improve their attention span. There is a very clear emphasis in the teacher's daily planning on developing pupils' language and literacy. The quality of teaching is good and the skills of speaking and listening are developed well in teacher directed activities although the opportunities for imaginative play are restricted by both the cramped accommodation and the shortage of appropriate resources. The children listen to the teacher and to each other and can take turns to speak. They are confident when speaking to adults and in front of a larger group and they are taught to speak in more formal situations when talking about their 'news' from home. Early reading skills are developed through the sharing of books and stories. Careful, regular assessment by the teacher and the classroom assistant ensures that all of the children make good progress. The children make good progress as they 'read' a book using picture clues and their own knowledge of the story. They recognise the letters of the alphabet and know the letter sounds. They learn that writing conveys meaning and are able to make predictions about events in the 'Big Books' which are used very effectively by the teacher. They quickly begin to recognise familiar words and learn how a story is structured with a beginning and end. The children enjoy books and are provided with an appropriate choice. They handle them very well and turn the pages carefully. The children make good progress in their writing skills. They are all able to make marks and draw pictures to share their ideas and many of the children can draw or trace letters correctly and record other information. Most children can write their name and the more able children can write simple

sentences. The children make good progress in this aspect of literacy.

Mathematics

50. In mathematics the children are making good progress. Through small group work and class activities they extend their mathematical language and learn to count, sort and measure. The staff ensure that the children become familiar with mathematical language through stories, rhymes, discussions and activities. The quality of teaching is good and songs and rhymes are used effectively to develop the children's mathematical understanding. The teachers have high expectations and interest and motivate the children. The children are taught to recognise shapes, weigh ingredients when cooking food such as pancakes and to improve their knowledge of number. They are taken to the local supermarket and purchase ingredients to bake gingerbread. They can name simple shapes and sort and classify objects by colour, shape and size. The teacher and classroom assistant take every opportunity to introduce numbers and counting into activities. Many children are able to count up to ten and beyond, recognise numbers and record numbers up to five. More able children know the symbols for numbers and can count in two's. They can order numbers up to 10 and have a good understanding of sets of three or four objects. Some table games and computer programs help the children to match numbers and objects. However, the provision and planning for a wide variety of practical tasks is restricted by the lack of resources and the children have few opportunities to play number games to extend their mathematical language.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

51. The scrutiny of the teacher's planning and evidence of the children's previous work indicates an appropriate range of work in this area of learning. The children are developing an appropriate awareness of places in and beyond their own environment. They are taken on walks to identify different features around the school and in the town. They cover topics on houses and homes and acquire a basic understanding of maps and direction. The children's knowledge and understanding of places beyond the immediate vicinity is developed further with visits to Cannock Chase and to a school in a rural location. The children have an appropriate understanding of the past and the present and understand chronology in relation to their birthdays and families.
52. Topics such as change and growth develop the children's scientific knowledge and understanding. They study the changes that take place to ingredients when preparing food such as pancakes and jelly. When studying sunflowers they learn to use hand lenses to look carefully at the dissection of the flower. They plant seeds and are taken pond dipping. The children solve simple problems by making and modifying models and can use a variety of small constructional equipment. They cut, paste and stick as they create their models out of card and paper. They learn to use the keyboard and the mouse to operate a number of different computer programs. The staff plan to cover all of the different aspects of this area of learning and though much effort is put into setting out the classroom, the lack of space and resources limits what is on offer. The opportunities for the pupils to work individually and in small groups and to carry out investigations with water, wet and dry sand and to explore light, sound and magnetism are restricted. The staff make good use of the playground to compensate for the lack of space for activities during the summer months to further develop learning.

Creative development

53. The children have many opportunities to experiment with colour texture and shape and they are making good progress in this aspect of their creative development. They can paint flowers using water colours and create very effective self-portraits. They print attractive patterns using vegetables and leaves. They handle pencils and crayons well and produce well proportioned drawings. The children are encouraged to listen carefully to music and have opportunities to make their own music using percussion

instruments. The children respond well to music and join in confidently with action rhymes and songs. The area available for imaginative play is small and under-resourced and is inadequate in meeting the needs of this aspect of the children's learning.

Physical development

54. The children make satisfactory progress in some aspects of this area of learning. However, there is little equipment to allow strong movements, wheeled toy riding, imaginative role-play or large building block work to take place. Lessons in the hall are well planned and the children are developing a rhythmic response to music. They learn to move around the school and classroom in a controlled way. Manipulative skills, seen in modelling with the small construction equipment and using pencils and other tools, are appropriately developed. The children enjoy physical activity and respond enthusiastically.

• ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

English

55. The end of key stage results for 1999 indicate that the standards of attainment at age seven in writing is well above the national average and in reading is above the national average. These results relate to those pupils who took the tests last year. Inspection findings reveal that attainment for the majority of pupils by the end of Key Stage 1 is above average and by the time they leave the school it is well above average. There has been a significant improvement in standards since the last inspection. Good progress is made in Key Stage 1 and very good progress is made in Key Stage 2. The pupils with special educational needs make very good progress and the work they do is well matched to their capability.
56. Attainment in speaking and listening is good. The Literacy Hour is used very effectively to improve the pupils' listening skills, particularly during shared text sessions. By the end of Key Stage 1 many pupils are confident in both class and small group situations. The majority of them make good progress in listening carefully to what their teachers and the other pupils have to say. They can follow instructions and act on suggestions. The majority are capable of expressing their own views clearly and they are able to use questions to develop their own understanding. Very good progress is made in Key Stage 2 and by the time the pupils leave the school they can express opinions about the effectiveness of language in stories and offer alternatives. Most of the pupils reflect carefully on questions and can explain and justify their answers and opinions.
57. In Key Stage 1, the pupils make good progress with their reading. The youngest children quickly begin to understand how books work and that illustrations and text tell a story. Books are handled with care and they enjoy sharing them with adults. Phonic skills are taught systematically in the Literacy Hour and the pupils quickly begin to recognise letters and the sounds they make and quickly develop an appropriate sight vocabulary. Older pupils in the key stage realise when they have made an error in their reading and use picture and context cues to self-correct. The pupils in all classes enjoy the shared text work in the Literacy Hour and by the end of Key Stage 1 they are able to talk confidently about the characters and settings for stories. Some pupils are beginning to read silently and are developing preferences for certain types of books and authors. Very good progress is made in Key Stage 2. The majority of pupils enjoy reading for pleasure and to obtain information. They are able to discuss their preferences and many of them are familiar with the names of the authors they enjoy. Throughout the school careful records are kept of the pupils' reading. Those pupils who experience difficulties in learning to read are well supported and they make good progress. Valuable help is given by parents and carers who hear their children read at home. The library is small and cramped. It requires additional storage and a wider selection of books so that it can be used in a more systematic and independent way by the pupils. The school is

well aware of this problem and has already reviewed its book collection and sought the help of a governor who is a qualified librarian.

58. Progress in writing is very good in Reception and in Year 1 but is slower in Year 2. The early skills of writing are systematically taught and the standards of handwriting are very good by the time the pupils leave the school. Younger pupils are given practice in copying shapes and patterns, learn to form their letters correctly and observe correct spacing. Many are able to sequence words in simple sentences using the basic punctuation of full stops and capital letters. The pupils have opportunities to write for a variety of purposes and audiences including stories, letters, questionnaires, newspaper reports and poems. By the end of Year 4 the pupils organise their writing. Their knowledge of grammar and their use of punctuation is very well developed and many pupils set their work out in paragraphs. The pupils' imaginative writing and poetry shows a varied vocabulary. The pupils are beginning to write more effectively in other areas of the curriculum. There are accounts of out-of-school visits and, in history, the pupils are able to distinguish in considerable detail between modern liners and Viking ships. The work is challenging and maintains the pupils' interest and attention. The pupils have interesting ideas and develop their skills to present these in writing. The opportunities for independent research using non-fiction texts is underdeveloped, but the use of computers for this type of work is developing well in Key Stage 2. The standards in spelling in both key stages are satisfactory but greater use could be made of aids to writing and spelling, such as sentence makers and word banks in Key Stage 1. The school has set an appropriate target to raise standards in this aspect of the pupils' work.
59. Attitudes to learning are very good. The pupils are able to sustain concentration and are keen to work hard. They work co-operatively, sharing ideas and are usually very supportive of each other's efforts. In the Literacy Hour almost all pupils can work independently during the time that the class teacher is with the focus group.
60. The quality of teaching is good in Key Stage 1 and very good in Key Stage 2, with some very successful teaching in Years 1, 3 and 4. The work is well planned and it takes due account of the National Literacy Framework for teaching. In all classes the group tasks are varied to meet the needs of pupils of different attainment. The teachers are using the Literacy Hour very effectively to teach sentence and text level work. Word level work is taught well in Key Stage 1 and in Key Stage 2, text level work is particularly effective in teaching grammatical structures and some very good work was observed in developing the pupils' understanding of paragraphs. All teachers ensure that there is a clear link between reading, writing and spelling. In all of the lessons the teacher's skills in questioning pupils are good and extend the pupils' thinking. The pupils' work is marked conscientiously and the teachers' comments set out points for improvement. The pupils' progress is very carefully assessed and the information is used to target individual support and to plan future work. A very good feature of English is the attention that is given to poetry. During the inspection very good teaching was observed in Key Stage 2 which raised the pupils' understanding of different types of poetry and encouraged them to write their own poems and to choose examples to read to their class.
61. The headteacher is the English co-ordinator and the school piloted the introduction for the Literacy Hour. She has led staff training, observed all the staff in their teaching and continues to carry out regular monitoring of the quality of teaching. This has had a very significant impact on the quality of the pupils' learning and has ensured the smooth implementation of the National Literacy Strategy. The Literacy Hour is well resourced with a good selection of books for shared reading. The assessment procedures, a weakness in the last inspection are very good and the setting of clear targets has achieved significant improvements in the pupils' levels of attainment.

Mathematics

62. The end of key stage results for 1999 indicate that the standards of attainment at age seven in mathematics are above the national averages. These results relate to those pupils who took the tests last year.
63. At the last inspection, standards of achievement were judged to be below national expectations by the end of Key Stage 1 and Year 4. Inspection findings reveal that attainment for the majority of pupils by the end of Key Stage 1 is above average and by the time they leave the school it is well above average. The pupils in Reception and in Key Stage 1 make good progress. In Key Stage 2 they make very good progress. The pupils with special educational needs receive very good support which helps them to make very good progress across the school.
64. By the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils add and subtract numbers to twenty successfully and have a sound knowledge of the 2s, 5s and 10s multiplication tables. In Year 1 pupils can count to a hundred in ones and tens, and identify missing numbers on a hundred square. They have regular experience of handling and naming two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes from an early age. The Year 1 pupils name and sort two-dimensional shapes such as circles, squares, triangles, rectangles and hexagons. They know the properties of these shapes and in guessing games they can identify the shape from properties such as number of sides, and corners. They ask mathematical questions, for example "Are all the sides the same?". They use the words curved and straight to describe the sides of the shapes. By the end of Year 2, all can name three dimensional shapes such as cube, cuboid and sphere. The pupils make good progress in developing quick mental recall of number. In Year 1 they can calculate simple addition and subtraction in their heads. By the end of Year 2 they can add two-digit numbers and the higher attaining pupils show understanding of place value. Lower attaining pupils make good progress and use apparatus to help them calculate.
65. By the end of Year 4, the pupils have a good knowledge of the properties and names of shapes and angles and can use nets to make three-dimensional shapes. They build on the practical experience in Key Stage 1 of measuring the area of flat surfaces using both non-standard and standard units of measurement. They can use standard measures of length, volume and time and by Year 4 the pupils can calculate the perimeters of shapes. There is very good use and application of the pupils' number skills, including solving open-ended questions based on real life situations. The pupils have a good understanding of shape, space and measure. Data handling is good in Key Stage 1 and very good in Years 3 and 4. Computers are used well in this aspect of mathematics.
66. In Key Stage 2, the pupils make very good progress in number. By the end of Year 4, the majority of pupils are proficient in calculating to thousands using the four rules of number, including decimals. The pupils make very good progress in the rapid recall of multiplication tables and the addition and subtraction of numbers. They apply mathematics in other subjects - for example, in science by recording results of their investigations in charts and graphs, through time lines in history and the use of direction and coordinates in geography.
67. The pupils enjoy mathematics. This is a direct reflection of the quality of teaching. The pupils are attentive during the introduction to lessons and are eager to supply answers to show knowledge gained from previous lessons. They concentrate on tasks. The pupils want to learn, they try hard to complete tasks successfully and are proud of their work. Good use of encouragement and praise by the teacher inspires them to work hard. Their behaviour is very good and class teachers have established set routines, clearly understood by the class, based on high expectations of behaviour and work. The pupils in Year 2 have too few opportunities to use the computer to support teaching and learning in mathematics or to use of the computer to produce graphs and tables. In other classes the computer is

used well to support teaching and learning in mathematics.

68. The teaching of mathematics is good overall, with satisfactory and very good teaching observed in Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 2 it is very good with one excellent lesson observed. There was no unsatisfactory teaching observed. In the best lessons, the teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding, plan interesting lessons, manage pupils well and make good use of resources. Lessons have good pace and teachers have high levels of expectation and work is challenging and this motivates the pupils. The lesson plans identify what pupils are expected to learn and work is carefully matched to these objectives and to the age and abilities of the pupils. The lessons begin with lively oral mental mathematics sessions that set the mood for the activities which follow. Good use is made of questions and discussion to build on previous learning and so ensure progress. Work is regularly marked and homework set. The assessment of the pupils' attainment is very good in Key Stage 1 and excellent in Years 3 and 4. It is used to help with future planning so all pupils make good progress. For pupils with special educational needs and for pupils in Key Stage 2 the use of day-to-day assessment is excellent.
69. The subject leader plays a significant role in school improvement. The school has strived to raise standards by improving the quality of teaching. Much effort has been put into improving teachers' planning and this has raised standards. Test results have been analysed and targets set for improvement. The subject leader has ensured that the National Numeracy Strategy is implemented successfully. The scheme of work ensures that there is a clear progression in skills and knowledge throughout the school. There has been very good improvement in mathematics since the last inspection and the school's capacity for further improvement is very good.

Science

70. The attainment of seven year old pupils, according to assessments made by teachers in 1999 show a drop in the number of seven year old pupils achieving Level 2 and a slight increase in the number of pupils achieving the higher Level 3. These results are close to the national average.
71. Inspection evidence shows that at the end of Key Stage 1 the pupils' attainment in the current Year 2 is close to the national average and at the end of Year 4 it is well above average. The school has fully addressed the issues in the previous inspection relating to standards in science in Key Stage 1.
72. By the end of Key Stage 1 the pupils have a basic understanding of electricity and can construct a simple circuit. They are able to recognise common materials and sort them into groups. They can investigate and classify objects made from different materials into those which will change their shape by twisting, bending or stretching. The pupils can identify and name parts of plants. They grow plants from seeds and carefully observe and record the changes in their growth. The pupils can name the major parts of the body and know that they need exercise and a good diet to keep healthy. Most pupils know about fair testing and are able to make simple suggestions to keep the test fair. They record their observations as directed by the teacher and are able to communicate their understanding in drawings and through talking about what they have done
73. By the end of Year 4 the pupils use their skills in carrying out investigations planned by the teacher. They make predictions based on their increasing knowledge and understanding and they can carry out a fair test. They can test their predictions and use equipment with increasing skill and accuracy. Although the teachers choose the equipment and closely direct the pupils in the tasks and in recording their findings, the pupils are able to observe carefully and make accurate measurements as they carry out investigations. Higher attaining pupils are able to suggest reasons for their findings and draw conclusions. The pupils can identify and name major organs of plants and the body and their functions. They know about life processes and that all animals and plants eat,

breathe, grow and reproduce. The pupils recognise the differences between solids, liquids and gases. They can separate mixtures through filtering and dissolving.

74. The pupils in both key stages have a wide experience in experimental work, although too much is directed by teachers. This over direction gives the pupils little opportunity to find things out for themselves and record their results. Literacy and numeracy skills are used well to record the results of investigations in writing and charts. Lower attaining pupils are well supported with their literacy skills in science lessons so that they can read worksheets and record their work and so make progress. In Key Stage 2 the pupils can use mathematical skills to recording results and handle data including using the computer. However, the pupils have limited opportunities to use the library for research but teachers display books about the topics in the classroom.
75. The pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1 but it slows in Year 2. In Key Stage 2 their progress is very good. The pupils with special educational needs make very good progress. The progress made as the pupils move through the school can be seen, for example in the study of materials. The youngest pupils can name common materials and sort objects according to the materials from which they are made. By the end of Year 2 they understand that some materials change when heated or cooled. By Year 4 pupils know that some materials are better thermal insulators than others. The pupils learn to measure with increasing accuracy and have acquired very good skills by the time they leave the school. However, the over-direction by teachers of what will be investigated and how these investigations will be carried out and recorded, restricts the pupils' progress and prevents them from making choices about how to communicate their results.
76. The pupils have positive attitudes to science and their behaviour is very good. They enjoy practical investigations and are able to work cooperatively. They take pride in their work and present it neatly. The pupils stay on task and work hard.
77. The quality of science teaching is good overall with some very good teaching observed in Years 3 and 4. One lesson at the end of Key Stage 1 was unsatisfactory. In the most effective lessons, the teaching is lively and dynamic which results in very good pupil participation. The teacher involves the pupils and assesses their understanding throughout the lesson through effective questioning. The pupils are actively drawn into discussions and investigations. The teachers have high expectations of the pupils' work and behaviour. Materials are well prepared and the pace of the lesson is brisk. The pupils are given positive feedback and opportunities to tell the class what they have learned. This increases their confidence. The teachers' planning is detailed and builds on previous learning. Where teaching is less effective the teacher had too many learning objectives for the lesson that resulted in a lack of focus. The work was over-directed and lacked challenge; the pupils were given too few opportunities to offer suggestions as to how they could investigate or record results. The pace was slow and time was not well used.
78. Science is taught within a topic approach in Key Stage 1 with discrete science teaching in Key Stage 2. The scheme of work outlines science topics and the skills and knowledge that will be taught in each year. Lesson planning is very good; it is detailed and thorough. The co-ordinator has worked hard to improve the subject. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment are very good. Assessment meets statutory requirements at the end of Key Stage 1. Assessment information is used very effectively to plan activities for pupils of differing attainment and to report pupils' attainment in science to parents. Homework is used effectively. There are plans to match the school's scheme to the national scheme of work for science. The monitoring of teaching and learning in science by the head teacher is very thorough and the school has identified the need to develop the pupils' investigative skills as a priority for this year.
79. There are adequate resources. Information technology is under-used to support teaching and

learning in science. The pupils do not have access to a wide enough range of programs to fully support and extend their learning in science.

OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES

• Information Technology

80. Information Technology is an improving subject. The standards that the pupils attain in Key Stage 1 are average and their attainment is above average by the time they leave the school. The development of the new scheme of work and investment in hardware is addressing the weaknesses identified in the previous inspection. The result is that pupils throughout the school are now making better progress in developing their information technology skills and the provision for the subject has improved since the last inspection. The school is beginning to benefit from the co-ordinator's expertise and there are plans to increase the number of computers and to continue to develop the confidence of staff through in-service training.
81. Skills are taught progressively across the school; they are assessed regularly and the pupils are making satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1 and good progress in Key stage 2. In Key Stage 1 the younger pupils can use simple word and number games appropriately; they have basic keyboard skills and can type simple texts. In Year 1, the pupils are able to use the mouse and they are able to use the computer to draw a diagram of a flower and label its different parts. They use English and mathematics programs and science programs such as 'My World' to improve their knowledge in these subjects. They are able to print out their work. In Year 2 the majority of pupils know how to use the space bar, delete, shift and return keys. The majority change and load programs successfully. The pupils use a scanner and the computer to produce imitation passports. By the end of the key stage they can write text on screen and are learning to edit their work. They are confident in following instructions on screen; they can save their work and find it again and can programme the floor robot to move in a variety of directions.
82. In Key Stage 2, the pupils make good progress and their attainment is above average by the end of Year 4. In both classes in Key Stage 2 the teachers make good use of ICT to support the pupils' work in other subjects such as English, mathematics and history. Word processing skills are effectively taught and the pupils are able to communicate ideas and information using different font sizes. They can change the colour of the text, use a spell check and present their work in varying formats. They are developing a good understanding of storing and sorting information and can devise a database to store information about the different types of houses in which they live. They use the internet to locate and share information; letters are exchanged with other users and pen-friends. Art programs are used to improve the pupils' 'modelling' skills when they produce Christmas cards and posters. The pupils are able to interrogate the CDROM and locate and download information about the Anglo-Saxons to include in their work. Each pupil has their own diskette on which to store their work.
83. Throughout the school the pupils enjoy working with IT equipment. They are enthusiastic and are keen to work with computers and to develop their skills. They work well collaboratively and take turns fairly. They enjoy talking about their work and explain what they are doing confidently.
84. It was only possible to observe a limited amount of direct teaching but an appropriate range of activities is planned by the teachers in Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 2 the co-ordinator's expertise has a significant impact on the standards that the pupils attain and there is evidence that standards are beginning to rise further in Key Stage 1 as the teachers' confidence improves. The co-ordinator has re-written the scheme of work which now identifies what is to be taught in each year group. A progressive skills check list

provides a clear assessment of the pupils' achievements.

· **Religious Education**

85. There was no opportunity to observe religious education lessons in Key Stage 1 and only lessons in Years 3 and 4 were observed. Judgements are based on those observations, a scrutiny of previous work and talking to pupils. Standards of attainment are good at the end of Key Stage 1 and Year 4. The pupils attainment meets the expectations in the locally Agreed Syllabus and they make good progress across the school. The pupils have a good factual knowledge and understanding of its religious significance.
86. By the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils are aware of their own feelings and what makes them happy or sad. They have knowledge of Jesus' life and stories from the Bible. They identify features of a Christian church and a developing factual knowledge and understanding.
87. By the end of Year 4 pupils show an awareness of people taking religion seriously. They understand some of the symbolism in Christianity and know the important events in Jesus' life. They recount Old Testament stories and recite the Lord's Prayer. The pupils celebrate the Harvest Festival by sharing food with others in the community. They have a growing knowledge and understanding of the sacred buildings, practices and festivals of other religions. They know that Diwali is the Hindu Festival of Light and the significance of candles to that festival. The pupils also understand the significance of the Seder Plate in the Jewish Passover, and that during the Islamic festival of Ramadan the people of that faith eat no food from dawn to dusk. By Year 4 the pupils know that Sukkot is a Jewish festival that lasts for one week. They understand that these celebrations and festivals although different from their own, have a significance to people of the other faiths.
88. The pupils' progress is good in acquiring factual knowledge and in being able to reflect on aspects of religion. The pupils' attitudes are very good, they show a respectful and interested attitude when discussing other faiths. Year 3 pupils were very interested in the festivals of other religions and designed posters showing aspects of celebration.
89. The quality of teaching is good. The teachers' planning has clear learning objectives. Opportunities for pupils to discuss different aspects of life and religion are included in the lessons. The pupils are frequently invited to reflect on what they are learning and on their feelings. The previous inspection report identified assessment and monitoring of religious education as an area for development. Assessment is now very good and systematic monitoring takes place.

· **Art**

90. There was only opportunity to observe one art lesson in Key Stage 1 and no lessons were observed in Key Stage 2. Judgements are based on the scrutiny of displays around the school including assessment work samples, discussion with staff and the teachers' planning.
91. Throughout the school, the pupils are making good progress in art. In both key stages the pupils attain standards that are above the expectations for their age. They demonstrate good skills technique in using a variety of media including three-dimensional work. The work on display is in a range of media including paint, printing, textiles and collage. By the end of Key Stage 1 the pupils understand colour mixing and are developing competence in making stylised representations. They are beginning to include detail in their work and to refine their work by studying closely what they

see. When working with pastels they realise that they can create a different effect by blending the colours. Older pupils recreate the work of artists and show good observation of the style and techniques used, for example by Lowry, Van Gogh, Monet and Kandinsky. Assessment tasks are set each term and are kept as part of the pupil profiles. These show good progression by pupils in form, texture and tone.

92. The pupils' response to art is very good. They take much pleasure in showing what they have done and in the fact that their work is displayed around the school.
93. The quality of planning is good with clear learning targets. The pupils' work is very effectively displayed and valued. The locality is used well. For example, a visit to Lichfield Cathedral is used to provide opportunities for the pupils to participate in brass rubbing, sketching, banner making, creating mosaics made from seeds as well as learning techniques to create stained glass windows. Some links are made with other subjects, for example Saxon masks linked with the history topic work.
94. Since the last inspection very good assessment procedures have been implemented and the moderation of pupils' work in art is also very good.

Design and technology

95. There was little opportunity to observe design and technology during the period of inspection and so judgements are based on evidence gained through the scrutiny of pupils' previous work, discussion with pupils and teachers.
96. In the previous report pupils' attainment was unsatisfactory. This is not the case now. The issues identified in that report have been fully addressed and the pupils attain standards appropriate for their age in Key Stage 1 and standards above the expectations for their age in Key Stage 2. The pupils in Key Stage 1 make satisfactory progress and in Key Stage 2 their progress is good. By the end of Key Stage 1 the pupils can make models using construction sets and recycled materials. They make mathematical shapes from construct-o-straws. They cut materials using scissors and join them using glue. The pupils draw simple pictures of what they make. Work in Key Stage 2 includes designing and making packaging. The packaging is made using nets and is related to work in mathematics. Other work is based on history topics such as the Romans and Tudors. An example of this included the re-enactment of the fighting at Hadrian's Wall, complete with the wall made from boxes. The work in Key Stage 2 is of a high standard and includes a wide range of materials being used. The pupils' work includes mechanisms and understanding of structures, materials and components. The pupils' designing and making skills are well developed. They identify the materials and tools they will use and plan the order of working. The pupils know how to work with a large range of materials including wood, clay, card and even soil and plants when designing and making plate gardens. Some of the designs show originality and the products are made with care and finished to a high standard.
97. The pupils have very positive attitudes to their work in design and technology. They enjoy the practical tasks and some of the older pupils' designs show creativity. Behaviour in lessons is very good.
98. Only one design and technology lesson was observed during the inspection which was excellent. The pupils designed and constructed a package in which to store a game that they had made. The teacher's expectation of the pupils' was very high and the work produced was of a very good quality. The school has successfully implemented the scheme of work and this is having a positive impact on standards. The subject is taught mainly through a topic approach which effectively links

and draws upon other subjects to provide a meaningful context for the pupils' work. The school is adequately resourced. There is close monitoring of planning, teaching and attainment. The capacity for further improvement is very good under the leadership of the present co-ordinator.

Geography and history

99. There was very little opportunity to observe history and geography lessons and so judgements are based on the one lesson seen in each subject, scrutiny of planning documents and pupils' work, as well as discussion with staff and pupils.
100. Across the school the pupils make good progress. Discussions with pupils about their past and present work indicate that in both key stages standards that are above the expectations for the pupils' age. The pupils in Year 2 and Year 4 talk confidently about the work they have been doing in these subjects. In geography, the pupils are able to make observations of the physical features of their surroundings and they use appropriate vocabulary. The work in Key Stage 1 has enabled the pupils to acquire a basic understanding of the weather and seasonal patterns. They find out about local services when they visit the Royal Mail office and the police station and when the police come into the school and talk about their work in the community. In Year 1 a visit to a supermarket the pupils look behind the scenes and find out how the goods are always available for customers to purchase. An understanding of maps is gained from the study of their own town. The pupils in Year 2 can describe some of the features of land that is represented on maps. For example, rivers, mountains, cities and towns. They have a sound understanding of their local environment and can compare their own way of life in Stone to that of a child living in a desert region. The pupils in Key Stage 2 extend their understanding of the weather and investigate temperature variations around the school site. They are able to plot land use in the town and that adjacent to the Trent and Mersey Canal. They distinguish between retail and residential use and are aware of the need for services in the community. They talk confidently about their current work and understand why so much of our food is imported. In this work they learn why certain foods can only be grown in certain types of climate. In a detailed study of mining they discover the effects of quarrying on the countryside and how the land can be reclaimed.
101. In history the youngest pupils are able to distinguish between past and present. They use appropriate vocabulary to describe people who are older and younger than themselves, and to describe the passage of time. Their factual knowledge of the past is being developed through studying famous people and through visits to Shugborough Hall and the Potteries. By the end of Year 4 the pupils' knowledge and understanding of history and historical events is well developed. They are able to talk confidently about their past and current work. They have a very good factual knowledge of the ways of life, beliefs and traditions of the Vikings and the Tudors. A strong feature of the teaching is the emphasis on the chronology of events which is well supported by the use of time-lines in the classrooms. In both key stages the pupils are provided with opportunities to dress in 'clothes from the past.' Younger children visit a Victorian school room and older pupils re-enact the Battle of Bosworth and the skirmishes on Hadrian's Wall.
102. The quality of teaching in the two lessons observed was very good. In the history lesson in Year 2, the teacher made very good use of period costumes and a timeline to give the pupils an understanding of when the Crimean war took place. In the Year 4 geography lesson, the teacher was able to obtain, from the local supermarket, collections of food imported from around the world. These were delivered at the start of the lesson. This excited the pupils' interest and the very clear objectives for the lesson ensured that they learnt where food came from and they were able to locate these countries on the world map by the end of the lesson.
103. The school's schemes of work are clear about what is to be taught from term to term. As a result,

all of these subjects are taught in a coherent and progressive way. The essential skills and knowledge are identified in the scheme of work and taught well. The pupils are given a wide range of relevant and stimulating first-hand experiences. The school provides fieldwork in the local community and beyond. The work is enjoyed by the pupils and it does a great deal to develop their skills, knowledge and use of language. The older Key Stage 2 pupils are encouraged to use their debating and interviewing skills in work about the Viking invasion which increases their knowledge and understanding of the events of those times. The library is underused by the pupils to carry out their own research in these subjects.

104. Resources for teaching and learning are satisfactory and they are used effectively to support the topics. Equipment is accessible to staff and pupils.

• **Music**

105. Throughout the school the pupils make satisfactory progress in music and attain standards that are appropriate for their age. They make good progress in aspects of composing and performing. The pupils enjoy music, including those with special educational needs. They join in all activities and generally perform well.

106. In the reception class the pupils can sing songs and rhymes from memory and a variety of musical instruments is made available for them to play. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils are confident with rhythms, can identify and respond to a beat and perform a variety of musical pieces and are developing a sense of rhythm. They sing well and are beginning to understand the importance of dynamics in singing loudly and quietly. They show enthusiasm for action songs and can vary the tempo as they sing and play untuned percussion instruments.

107. In Key Stage 2 the pupils continue to make satisfactory progress and display more independence and innovation in their use of instruments. Their understanding of dynamics improves and they are able to develop their skills when singing and playing instruments. In a Year 3 lesson the pupils work in small groups and compose music to accompany the chanting of a magic spell. They create sounds that effectively match the mood of the spell making. By the end of Year 4 pupils' composition skills are developing well and they perform their compositions confidently in front of the class. They are able to evaluate their own and others' performance. Singing is particularly well developed and the school has a choir that performs to a high standard in assembly and to local audiences in the community. Their performance reflects their ability to sing with enthusiasm and feeling. A small number of pupils can accompany the singing by playing the recorder.

108. The pupils really enjoy singing and playing instruments and even in their enthusiastic response in lessons they listen to teachers and their behaviour is very good. They are able to improve their performances and respond positively to any suggestions by others in their group and by staff. Pupils appreciate others' performances and spontaneously show this appreciation.

109. The quality of teaching ranges from satisfactory to excellent. Lessons are very well planned and contain a balance of activities that allows the pupils to participate in playing, listening, appraising and composing. The excellent teaching is exemplified by the excellent use of time and presentation of the lesson. Expectations are high and the very good planning has links with the pupils' work in literacy. The teacher's enthusiasm for the subject motivates the pupils and encourages their best performances. The group work is managed expertly and the pupils are encouraged to listen carefully and to perform at a high level. The different group performances are used well to demonstrate aspects of the pupils' performance that can be improved.

110. Assessment is thorough and is very effectively used to inform planning and ongoing assessment in lessons is responded to immediately so ensuring progress. This addresses the issue related to assessment contributing to teachers' planning identified in the last inspection.
111. The music curriculum is well managed and adequately resourced although there are few melodic instruments and few instruments from other cultures. Some pupils in Years 3 and 4 are provided with the opportunity to learn how to play the violin.

• **Physical Education**

112. It was only possible to observe one lesson in physical education during the inspection. However, the scrutiny of the scheme of work and lesson planning, together with the discussions held with teachers and pupils indicates that an appropriate curriculum is provided for the pupils. The requirements of the National Curriculum are fully met and a very useful policy outlines the expectations and progressive range of work that is to be covered in gymnastics, dance, games, swimming and athletics. The teachers' termly planning clearly covers these aspects of the physical education programme and there are detailed lesson plans that take account of the progressive skills that are to be taught. The pupils in Years 2, 3 and 4 are taught to swim and Year 4 pupils have opportunities to take part in activities in a local environmental centre.
113. Resources are satisfactory and although the hall is adequate it is used for the storage of dining furniture which severely restricts the space available to the pupils' during gymnastic lessons. In the one lesson observed in Year 1 the teacher managed the pupils very well and used demonstration very effectively to emphasise safety and to draw attention to different types of balances. The pupils responded willingly and enthusiastically throughout the lesson.
114. A wide range of extra curricular activities are provided including skittle-ball, football, cricket and country dancing. The teachers have attended a TOPPS course which has resulted in the introduction of a wider variety of games into the curriculum.

PART C: INSPECTION DATA

115. SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspection was undertaken by an independent team of inspectors, led by Mr Peter Belfield, a Registered Inspector of Schools. During the inspection 37 lessons or part lessons were observed; this amounted to over 28 hours. A number of assemblies and registration periods were observed. Planned discussions took place with the headteacher, teachers, non-teaching staff and governors. The pupils' work was scrutinised and a selection of pupils were heard to read. Additionally, the inspectors talked to many pupils about their work and asked them to read samples of their own work. All of the documentation provided by the school was analysed. A parents' meeting was held and 38 parents' questionnaires were completed. These were analysed and the results helped to inform the inspection.

116. DATA AND INDICATORS

Pupil data

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
YR – Y4	122	3	18	19

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers (YR – Y4)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	5.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.02

Education support staff (YR – Y4)

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked each week	34

Average class size:	25
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Financial data

Financial year:

1998/99

	£
Total Income	227,890
Total Expenditure	234,250
Expenditure per pupil	1,673
Balance brought forward from previous year	13940
Balance carried forward to next year	7580

PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:

122

Number of questionnaires returned:

38

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	59.5	32.4	8.1		
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	68.4	31.6			
The school handles complaints from parents well	29.7	54.1	16.2		
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	54.1	46.2	2.7		
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	62.2	35.1			
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	64.9	35.1			
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	51.4	37.8	8.1	2.7	
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	52.6	44.7		2.6	
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	62.2	29.7	8.1		
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	54.1	40.5	5.4		
My child(ren) like(s) school	75.7	24.3			