

# INSPECTION REPORT

**CHADSMOOR COMMUNITY INFANT AND  
NURSERY SCHOOL**

Cannock

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique reference number: 124068

Headteacher: Mrs S Williams

Reporting inspector: Joyce Taylor  
4275

Dates of inspection: 1<sup>st</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> July 2002

Inspection number: 24994

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

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and nursery school

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 to 7 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Kingsway  
Chadsmoor  
Cannock  
Staffordshire

Postcode: WS11 2EU

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs M Davis

Date of previous inspection: March 1998

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
4275	Joyce Taylor	Registered inspector	Art and design The Foundation Stage	The characteristics and effectiveness of the school The school's results and pupils' achievements Teaching and learning Leadership and management Key issues for action
11084	Jane Hughes	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development Pupils' welfare, health and safety Partnership with parents and carers
27337	Sylvia Oultram	Team inspector	English History Music Special educational needs	
4295	David Dodds	Team inspector	Science Religious education Information and communication technology Equal opportunities English as an additional language	
30954	Brian Ashcroft	Team inspector	Mathematics Design and technology Geography Physical education	Quality and range of opportunities for learning

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Chadsmoor Community Infant and Nursery School is situated on the outskirts of Cannock in the centre of a housing estate. The pupils are aged between 3 and 7 years. Currently there are 208 children who attend the school, including the 46 who attend the newly opened nursery part-time. The area experiences social considerable deprivation. Most children live in the immediate area, which is mainly rented housing. Just under 20 per cent of the children are eligible for free school meals, which is about average. An average proportion of children (24 per cent) are identified as having special educational needs, mostly for learning difficulties, and a small number have physical disabilities, emotional and behavioural difficulties, autism and speech difficulties. 6 children have a statement. This figure is above average. Most children enter reception with well below average standards. Six children speak English as an additional language; at home they speak Chinese, Bengali, Hindi and Swahili. All other children are of white English heritage with roughly an equal number of boys and girls. The school has recently experienced considerable changes to the staffing and still has two temporary teachers in reception classes.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

This is a very good school with some excellent features. The teaching is very good overall and the children's progress has been much faster than average during their time in the school. The standards are above average by the time the children leave Year 2. The school is led and managed very effectively and provides very good value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- The children make very good progress and reach above average standards by the time they leave the school;
- The school is led and managed very well;
- The teaching is very good and classroom assistants provide the children with excellent support;
- The children are cared for extremely well;
- The nursery provides very good care and education for the children.

#### **What could be improved**

There are no key issues for action but the following developments could be considered for the governors' school development plan.

- Extend the pupils contact with different cultures;
- Raise the average standards in information communication technology, art, geography and design and technology by improving assessment procedures in these subjects;
- Extend, as planned, developments to support the children's standards in spoken English and social skills in the nursery and reception classes;
- Further improve the curriculum by providing more opportunities for children to take part in activities outside lessons.

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school has made excellent improvements since the last inspection. Standards in reading, writing, science, mathematics, history and music have improved and are now above average. This is a particular improvement in science as earlier standards were below average. The teaching is better and staff now use assessments extremely well. As a result the children are making faster progress than before. Provision for the youngest children has significantly improved with the opening of a very effective nursery. Across the school the children are given excellent personal support and their behaviour and attitudes to learning have improved and are very good. Pupils with special educational needs receive very good support. The way the school is led and managed has improved, particularly in identifying weaknesses

and finding ways to move forward. This aspect is now excellent. The governors now play a stronger role in the life of the school and provide good support. Weaknesses in health and safety have been improved to a good level.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on National Curriculum test results.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
reading	C	E	B	A	well above average A above average B
writing	C	D	D	C	average C below average D
mathematics	B	C	B	A	well below average E

Standards in reading, writing and mathematics, at the end of Year 2, are above average. These standards have improved since last year and are better than at the time of the last inspection. Standards in writing show a very good improvement on last year when they were below average. A recent focus on improving pupils' writing skills has been extremely successful. The standards show an upward trend. When the current Year 2 children started in reception their standards were well below average. This shows children have made very good progress. Higher attaining pupils achieve well and this year almost one fifth of the Year 2 children reached above average standards in writing and two fifths in reading and mathematics. Children who speak English as an additional language are given particular support and are making very good progress. Lower ability pupils are supported very well to do as much as they can. When the national test results for 2001, were compared with similar schools standards were average in writing and well above average in reading and mathematics. The school is on line to reach higher standards this year in all three subjects. The school sets high targets for the Year 2 children to reach in their national tests and the children have come extremely close to and even exceeded some of these targets over the past two years.

Standards in science are above average particularly when children investigate for themselves and decide what their findings mean. Standards in history, music, physical education and religious education are also above average. In the other subjects standards are average.

Children make rapid progress through the early stages of their learning in the nursery and reception classes. They are on course to reach or exceed the expected standards, apart from the speaking aspect of communication, language and literacy and in responding to the needs of others, by the time they move into Year 1. This is a considerable improvement on earlier years, despite extended changes to the teaching in reception.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. The children work very hard and thoroughly enjoy school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. No misbehaviour was seen during the inspection. Children have a clear understanding of why they should follow school rules.
Personal development and	Very good. Pupils take responsibility whenever they see a chance. They

relationships	form excellent relationships with each other and the adults.
Attendance	Satisfactory. This is the same as most nursery and infant schools.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2
Quality of teaching	Very good	Very good

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

Teaching and learning are very good and the children make rapid progress. The school has an excellent system of analysing the quality of teaching and learning and introducing improvements. During the inspection, more than half of the lessons were very good or excellent, almost all the rest were good and there were no unsatisfactory lessons. Very good teaching in reception and particularly in the nursery gets the children off to a strong start. Consistently very good teaching in Years 1 and 2 maintains these standards; the children carry out challenging work that moves them forward rapidly. The teachers involve pupils well through practical learning and use questioning very well to help children explain what they mean and check their understanding. Staff work very hard to link lessons to what the children have done before, so they can make sense of their work. The higher attaining children are taught well and are reaching appropriate standards. Lower attaining children are taught very well and make very good progress. The few children who do not speak English at home receive particularly effective attention to ensure they understand.

Teachers follow the National Strategies for literacy and numeracy and plan work at levels matching the children's needs. The excellent assessment systems for literacy, numeracy and science guide teachers and ensure they plan lessons very accurately to take the children forward. As a result, most of the children, across the school, are gaining ground quickly. In reading and mathematics almost two thirds of Year 2 reach above average standards. The teaching of literacy and numeracy skills is very good in all year groups. Speaking and listening are taught very well in Years 1 and 2 and the same developments are planned for the nursery and reception. Earlier weaknesses in writing have been remedied through very good quality training for the whole staff, resulting in very good teaching across the school. The teaching of reading is very good; the children can read confidently and they understand and can talk about what the text means. Numeracy skills are taught very well. Mathematics lessons include lively opportunities to develop calculating strategies and children are taught to use these skills in many different situations.

Classroom assistants provide excellent support. They monitor individual children to see if they have understood and provide information for the teachers after every lesson. They have an extremely caring and supportive approach but also ensure that the children work hard.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good in Years 1 and 2 and very good in the nursery and reception. Most aspects of the Year 1 and 2 curriculum are very good. The curriculum would be further improved by providing more opportunities for learning outside lessons.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. The systems are very well organised and staff teach the children carefully to ensure they make very good progress.

Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Very good. The children are taught English very well and their progress is carefully monitored. They are confident and happy learners who play a full part in the life of the school.
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Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. Provision for moral development is excellent. The children understand the effect misbehaviour has on others and are concerned not to upset each other. There are many opportunities for spiritual development. Social and cultural development are good although the children need more opportunities to learn about different cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. Excellent procedures to ensure the children are safe and secure. Their learning is assessed extremely effectively in English, mathematics and science but there are no assessments in other subjects. The school promotes race equality very well.

The school works well with parents and provides very good information. Parents' support their children's learning and there are plenty of opportunities for them to be involved in the life of the school.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The school is moving forward quickly and the children make very good progress. The headteacher has an extremely clear picture of how she wants the school to be and knows how to make the changes. She is supported very well by the deputy and other staff.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governors check how well the school is doing and provide very good support.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The way the school identifies and improves weak areas is excellent. All teachers are learning to evaluate their own areas of responsibility and most do this very well.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. The school measures its success against other schools and constantly seeks to improve. The budget is used carefully and very effectively to improve opportunities for the children.

The school has a very good match of teachers and support staff to meet its needs. The accommodation is good and is maintained very well by the site manager and janitor. Administrative office staff provide very good support. Learning resources are good and contribute well to improving the children's standards.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The school expects the children to work hard and do their best;</li> <li>The children like school;</li> <li>The teaching is good;</li> <li>They feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or problems.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The range of activities outside lessons;</li> <li>Information about how the children are getting on;</li> <li>The way the school works with parents;</li> <li>The amount of homework.</li> </ul>

The inspection team agrees with the parents' positive views about the school. Information about how well the children are doing is very good and the school works well with parents. The amount of homework is

typical for schools of this kind. The parents have correctly identified that the range of activities outside lessons is limited.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and pupils' achievements**

1. When pupils begin in the nursery, their overall attainment is well below that of other children of their age in all areas of learning apart from physical development, which is below average and aspects of personal and social, which are poor. This is the first complete year for the nursery and the children have made very good progress because of the very good and sometimes excellent teaching by the two nursery staff. Few children in reception experienced much pre-school learning and also entered the school with well below average standards. The good and often very good teaching in the reception classes has enabled the children to make very good progress overall. By the end of reception, their standards are still below average in aspects of speaking like explaining their thoughts or describing things but average in reading and writing. There is scope for all children to achieve a little more in their use of spoken language. The school has already identified this and has planned effectively for staff development opportunities in the autumn. The children have achieved particularly well in their knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and mathematical development where they have reached above average standards. Their standards are also above average in physical development. The children still show a higher than usual level of immaturity. Their standards in personal and emotional development are below average overall although assessments show they have made good progress.
2. In the 2001 national tests for the Year 2 children, the school's results were above average in reading and mathematics, and below average in writing. When compared to similar schools the results for mathematics and reading were well above average and writing was average. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 was average in reading, above average in mathematics and below average in writing. The boys and girls reached the same standards in all areas. These children entered reception with well below average standards and made good and sometimes very good progress. The performance of this year's children in Year 2 shows that the above average standards have been maintained in mathematics and reading and also reached in writing. These children entered reception with below average standards and have made very good progress.
3. Teacher assessments in science, in 2001, showed that the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level was broadly average, and an average proportion reached the higher level. This has been improved and now the standards are above average. In all these subjects the children are reaching higher standards than at the time of the last inspection. Apart from writing, which fell just short, the school exceeded its targets in the 2001 tests, particularly for the above average children. This year the school has met the identified targets of over 90 per cent per cent of pupils reaching level 2 in reading and writing and 96 per cent in mathematics. Almost twenty per cent of the children reached the above average level 3 in writing and almost forty per cent in reading and mathematics.
4. The school teaches literacy skills very effectively. When the current Year 2 entered reception their standards were below average overall in communication, language and literacy. Their progress in reading and writing has been very good. In Year 1 also the children have made very good progress. They entered reception with well below average standards and now their standards are average or above in all subjects. A

programme to improve their speaking skills has been particularly effective. They talk with interest, for example, about their science activities, describe what they are doing and recall exciting parts of their work. This programme will be extended into reception. Mathematics presents a very strong picture. The school teaches the numeracy skills systematically and very effectively. There is regular practice of mental calculations and direct teaching across the range of necessary skills. The children manage numbers quickly and accurately. Other aspects of mathematics are taught very well through practical and formal lessons. The school links subjects creatively and the children learn some mathematics skills, such as organising information, as part of their science work.

5. In science, standards have improved from below average at the time of the last inspection, through average in 2001, to above average now. More pupils are set to reach the higher level this year as they have particularly improved the skills necessary to plan and carry out their own investigations. This was the weakest aspect of science last year and is now above average.
6. Standards in art and design, geography, design and technology and information and communication technology (ICT) are average in Year 2. Development of these subjects has not yet been completed although their turns are identified in the school development plan. In history, religious education, physical education and music the standards are above average. Apart from history these subjects have received good attention that has improved the teaching and learning and raised the standards since the last inspection. History is taught well and the school uses the local environment to interest and inform the children.
7. Most pupils with special educational needs reach standards that are below the national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. This is because the rate at which they acquire literacy and numeracy skills is slower than average. However these children make very good progress in relation to their difficulties because their work in these subjects is adapted at the correct level. It is very carefully structured and based on an accurate assessment of what they need. Teachers and support staff take very good account of individual education plans and provide the children with extremely sensitive encouragement and care. They ensure the children feel successful and identify tasks and resources that offer the right amount of challenge. The classroom assistants, working with small groups of pupils or with individuals, make an excellent contribution and the pupils benefit enormously from this help.
8. Higher attaining children are identified by their teachers for additional tasks at an extended level. In almost all cases this works very well and these pupils usually make very good progress. Those children who speak English as an additional language usually reach average and sometimes above average standards. One or two pupils in the early stages of learning English receive extremely effective support and are making very good progress.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

9. Since the last inspection, the school has considerably strengthened this aspect of its work. Excellent relationships combine with pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour to make a very strong contribution to the positive school ethos.
10. Pupils have very good attitudes to learning and really enjoy coming to school. They listen very well when teachers explain tasks and concentrate hard during activities to ensure they produce their best work. Pupils across all year groups work hard during



lessons and produce work of impressive quality and quantity. Pupils are very polite and are quick to respond to questions about what they do in school. They are very much at ease in this calm and friendly environment. They chat happily to teachers and show tolerance and understanding for classmates who have specific problems. The youngest children in the nursery are equally focused and determined in everything they do. They are particularly good at listening to adults and try really hard to do their best. The nursery children respond so well because the adults have such a clear knowledge and understanding of how best to motivate them. The children in the nursery and reception are unsure how to manage some situations. They tend, for example, to go and fetch things they need because they do not know to ask others to pass resources. The very good attitudes shown by all pupils enables them to make the most of their time in school.

11. Standards of behaviour are very good; this is an extremely good-natured and orderly community where everyone is valued and learns to value others. Pupils are at their best when working in pairs and groups; they show great maturity as they share resources and listen to the views of others. During small group discussions, pupils listen carefully to what their peers say and make their own contributions at the appropriate time. No-one tries to talk over others and this is a direct result of the strong leadership shown by all adults as they consistently remind pupils they should not shout out but must listen to others. Lessons move on quickly as a result and little time is wasted.
12. Playtimes and lunchtimes are an outstanding feature of this school as pupils use the time positively to improve their physical and social skills. They make such good use of these more relaxed times during the school day because of the unusually large number of adults present who offer first hand help and constant encouragement. Pupils speak with delight about the new range of playground equipment. This is helping to improve their physical skills along with their personal and social development as they play happily together. Year 1 and 2 pupils have a very good sense of how to behave in a variety of social settings and younger children are quickly learning these skills. As a result, assemblies, dinner times and school visits are all very pleasurable learning experiences. There has been one fixed-term exclusion in the past year relating to a pupil who no longer attends the school.
13. Excellent relationships are at the heart of this school. This is a close knit and harmonious school community where pupils thrive in the very positive learning environment created by the staff. Pupil interactions reflect the exemplary role models offered by staff; they are friendly and are learning to become considerate members of a wider social group. Pupils offer support and friendship to each other in a spontaneous way. This is more developed in the children from Years 1 and 2 while the nursery and reception children are still learning not to put themselves first. Older children ask classmates with special needs to sit next to them during activities while others talk about how they help classmates who find particular tasks more difficult – ‘...but we only help them if they ask!’ said one pupil in Year 1 who did not want to appear too eager. Pupils with mobility problems are included in everything and are routinely at the centre of the playground action, surrounded by friends and helpers – their enjoyment of every minute is plain to see.
14. Pupils’ personal development is good and they make the most of any opportunities to take responsibility for various school routines. Teaching staff in the nursery make sure even the youngest children are encouraged to become increasingly independent - by taking the register to the office, for example, and always doing the maximum to take care of themselves. Pupils cope well with the security door systems and

lunchtime door monitors check carefully for 'passes' before they allow children in to the building to go to the toilet. Librarians make a good contribution to the school and other pupils help with tidying and packing away playtime equipment. Some pupils can select non-fiction books in the library and bring a selection back into class to support on going work in lessons.

15. Levels of attendance are in line with the national average and there is a punctual start to the school day.

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

16. The quality of teaching during the inspection was very good overall. Almost all teaching was good and more than half was very good. No unsatisfactory lessons were seen. There are many strengths in the teaching throughout the school, these are linked to the training and advice that teachers receive in meetings and following classroom observations by senior staff or subject specialists. Lessons are lively and interesting. In English, mathematics and science they are planned to build on earlier learning very effectively. This is because of regular assessments by the teachers and classroom assistants who check what the children need to learn next in order to meet set targets. The very best and highest quality teaching is in the nursery. Across the rest of the school there is good, very good and sometimes excellent teaching. This enables pupils of all abilities to achieve very well. This high quality is particularly striking because the school has experienced significant changes over the past two years due to the extended absence of five teachers and departure of another. This interrupted provision continues with two absent reception teachers and a redundancy that becomes effective from August 2002.
17. Teaching in the nursery is very good and some lessons seen were excellent. In a physical education lesson in the hall, for example, the children learned how to behave well in different parts of the school as they walked to the hall. They were shown how to feel their heart beat before and after energetic exercise and were taught a wide range of travelling movements, which they excelled at, particularly hopping. They pretended to go on a train journey and the staff helped them add and subtract passengers at each station while taking account of the driver who was not to be included in the calculations. This high quality teaching enabled the children to reach above average standards in their mathematics and physical development. In reception the teaching is good overall although there are also very good and excellent lessons. Although two reception teachers are absent, the temporary teachers work hard to maintain good lessons. They are supported very well by the permanent staff who help plan lessons and provide very good examples of teaching. The disturbance however, has caused some children anxieties and interrupted their learning slightly.
18. As the children move through the school expectations for their learning remains high. The teachers build extremely carefully on earlier learning, reminding and questioning the children to ensure they understand. In a games lesson, in Year 2, for example, the teacher used the children's skills of kicking and dribbling a ball using their toes to help them develop the same skill using their instep. She taught the class how to move and stop the ball, increasing their control, by constantly coaching and encouraging. Teachers know the curriculum very well, particularly in the subjects recently reviewed. They can step in to correct misunderstandings and move the children forward, by, for example asking difficult questions. In a reception mathematics lesson the teacher said 'How do you know 5 is missing?' and children were eager to say 'it should come in the gap before 6 and after 4.' When children begin tasks during lessons they are given extremely clear instructions. As a result they work without fuss and with

independence, leaving the teacher to concentrate on teaching specific groups. The support staff take full responsibility for a group and always assess how well their children have achieved the task by filling in an evaluation sheet. They also monitor what these children say during whole class lessons and note if they have understood or need further support. This excellent practice ensures the children achieve at a fast rate. The school's very thorough systems, to check on the pace of learning and provide targets, ensure the children keep up. Any individuals or groups of pupils who begin to slip are noted and given extra support.

19. The basic skills of literacy are taught very well across the school. The teachers have high expectations of the children and provide challenging lessons. This was seen in Year 1 when the children used speech bubbles to show what characters were saying. They were expected to use a range of punctuation to ensure their character asked a question, made a statement that needed an exclamation mark and ended other sentences with a full stop. The children wrote five sentences in all. This is a high standard for these young children and the teaching was excellent. Across all classes there is consistency in the way teachers refer to the children's targets in both literacy and numeracy and the children know what they have to do next. One satisfied reception child said 'I done my target, I spelled my words right'.
20. In writing, the below average standards reached by the Year 2 children in 2001 led to an extensive review of how the children were learning and how good the teaching was. Most teachers were found to be giving greater attention to reading and had less knowledge of how to teach the skills of writing. This has now been remedied. The staff received training to help the children write using more interesting vocabulary and better sentence structure. This has also improved pupils' speaking and listening skills as they learned to prepare, through talk, extended and interesting sentences. Pupils' spelling is good and their handwriting and letter formation has been developed.
21. In numeracy the teachers have very good knowledge of how to improve the children's skills when calculating. They ask the children to explain how they worked out answers and if there are alternative strategies that could be used. They are clear about National Curriculum levels and are moving the children along rapidly by noting what is needed to reach the next level and then making this the target. Maths is linked effectively to other subjects. In science, for example, when the children carefully organised their information about the pond creatures they found, and music in when they accurately count and beat time. Children are also given very good opportunities to develop their literacy skills in other subjects and they write lists in the role play areas, notes in science and labels to use around the school. In this way they both improve their standards in these subjects and also understand how to use their literacy and numeracy skills in everyday life.
22. Teaching provision for all pupils with special educational needs is very good. Staff are strongly committed to moving the children's learning forward in a steady and systematic way. The quality of learning plans is good overall, but occasionally some targets are too broad. Targets for a few children would benefit from being reviewed more frequently. Those children who speak English as an additional language receive extremely sensitive and careful support and make very good progress. One child, for example, was encouraged to talk about home events. The classroom assistant gently corrected grammar and extended vocabulary without unduly interrupting the conversation or creating any anxiety. A particular strength of the assistants' work is their excellent system of communication. As a result precise information is passed to the teachers helping to ensure that vulnerable children are cared for very successfully.

## HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS OR STUDENTS?

23. The school meets the statutory requirements and teaches all the subjects of the national curriculum. The learning opportunities are very good in the nursery and reception classes and good overall for Years 1 and 2 where some subjects still await development. This is an improvement since the last inspection when the curriculum was satisfactory overall. The very good curriculum for the youngest children is strongly supported by the excellent opportunities for children to learn through play and first hand experiences. Further opportunities for the children to speak in a wider range of situations is planned to improve their spoken language skills. The long term planning is very good and ensures that the curriculum is covered in an exciting way. Very good resources are used. Many are quite simple, like character headbands in the reception classes, but they provide children with strong direction and guide their play well. The strong links with assessment in English, mathematics and science, throughout the school, ensure that planning is well thought-out to move the children along in their learning.
24. There is a curriculum plan in place, in every subject, to track what is being taught. This helps to ensure that the children's learning is developed systematically, in music, for example, where the children's skills in making and recording their own musical sounds are carefully developed. In English, mathematics and science this systematic development is particularly effective as children are quickly led through the basic skills they need. As a result, they make very good progress. For all subjects the school has adopted aspects of the nationally recommended schemes of work. These documents have been adapted to meet the needs of the children in school, and relate to their own experiences. In religious education for example, the children share bread to reinforce the idea of a large group eating together. The curriculum is supported by the many visits the children make to places such as 'Wonderland' and the Museum of Cannock Chase. The school has thoughtfully improved the lunchtime and playtime play equipment. The provision is now excellent and has done much to promote the very good behaviour in the school.
25. The school has very successfully implemented the national strategies for the teaching of literacy and numeracy. The effectiveness of both of these strategies is very good. In literacy many opportunities are created for the children to use their English skills across the curriculum. Additional lessons, which allow the children to write at length, are helping to raise the standards. The Numeracy Strategy has been used very well to raise the standards in mathematics. Basic number skills are taught very well and the children have a good understanding of number throughout the school.
26. The children have few opportunities to extend their learning or their social skills through activities outside lessons. The youngest children in particular would benefit from curriculum enrichment to support their personal development.
27. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE) is very good and supports pupils' personal development as they mature. The coordinator for this area is very well informed and attends relevant training courses. She ensures this information is communicated to staff and that new knowledge filters through into planning for the subject. Close links with community police have helped the school to draw up a strong drugs' education policy. The school delivers much of its PSHE programme through topic work in science. In addition, very good use is made of regular circle time activities to discuss aspects of healthy living and how pupils relate

what they have learned in lessons to their lives at home. For example, during a very well planned discussion on healthy living in a Year 2 class, pupils sat on the floor and talked about the relative merits of a selection of items found in most homes. Many pupils could give reasons why it was important to use soap, sunscreen and sunglasses and to change clothes after physical exercise. They could compare a range of foods and give very rational counter arguments when the class teacher played devil's advocate and described a 'healthy evening' of television viewing, cola drinking and chocolate eating. The teacher encouraged pupils to extend their answers and they responded with well considered arguments, fuelled by the humour she injected. One girl, for instance, was of the opinion that sweets and fizzy drinks are not acceptable but that 'you can play on the computer game for a little while'. All the pupils showed very good levels of recall about healthy options as they completed their 'Healthy Day' posters afterwards.

28. There are very good links with the local community; these are enhanced by the strong support offered by the governing body and they have a very positive impact on the quality of the curriculum. A good range of visits to areas of local interest is organised and this very good provision is cemented with the large number of visitors who come into school to talk to pupils about their work in the community. The school makes the most of any commercial links and receives a number of donations each year, including Easter eggs from a business source and a bird table from a local garden centre. Staff welcome the school's involvement in the 'Sure Start Trans Age Project' and a link worker from Age Concern supports staff and pupils each week in the nursery. Church representatives are regular visitors to the school. They lead assemblies and make very useful contributions to pupils' spiritual, moral and social development.
29. The school establishes very constructive relationships with other local schools and colleges of further education. Close liaison with the junior school to which pupils transfer at the end of Year 2, ensures that children and parents feel less anxious about the process and settle into new routines more easily. Pupils spend at least half a day at their new school. Staff collaborate very effectively to ensure academic and pastoral records are used well. The two schools have shared the cost of the record of achievement files and these are transferred along with pupils. This helps to maintain their value in the eyes of both children and parents and improves the transfer process. A new email system is being used for the first time this half-term to bring even closer ties between pupils in Years 2 and 3 as they discuss the new school. Year 6 pupils also come down to the school to read to pupils on World Book Day.
30. A number of students from local colleges and high schools come to the school on work and training placements. They offer very good levels of support to classteachers and some return in a voluntary capacity, once their training has finished. Local colleges also organise adult education courses at the school and these are very effective. Unfortunately, other courses do not run because of a lack of parental support but the headteacher is very keen to promote and run them whenever possible. A particular success story is the Family Learning Initiative; this is a source of organised help for parents to support their children's literacy and numeracy skills at home. Several parents have attended both courses and are full of praise for the initiative.
31. The provision for pupils' personal development is very good overall. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good. There are many occasions when pupils are given opportunities to experience moments for quietness and reflection. Similar moments occur in the school and classroom assemblies when

teachers share their own 'treasured possessions' with the children. Assemblies and religious education lessons make a valuable contribution to the spiritual provision, particularly because of the well-chosen themes. The teachers use the religious education lessons well to give pupils the opportunity to apply spiritual values to their daily lives.

32. The provision for moral development is excellent. Children's very good behaviour contributes significantly to the very good progress that pupils achieve in their work, because they try so hard with their tasks. Relationships throughout the school are excellent. Pupils are taught to be courteous and how to learn. For example, they are shown how to ask and respond to questions in Year 1. They are taught to know right from wrong and, and good efforts are acknowledged through the award of certificates and stars in assemblies. The school's excellent provision of outdoor games, activities and equipment for playtimes also contribute significantly to the very good behaviour. The school takes any parental concerns about behaviour seriously. The concern is recorded, responded to promptly, and followed up to ensure that the solution meets with approval.
33. The provisions for the children's social development is good, and would be very good if the pupils were given more opportunities to take responsibility and to participate in a suitable range of extra-curricular activities. The pupils respond well to the responsibilities that they are now given and they show that they could cheerfully and willingly accept more. The pupils fund raise for a range of national and local charities. They have effective links with local old people, and the junior school pupils. The secondary school pupils answer children's letters and many other visitors, including a good range of students, come to school to widen the pupils' social experience. The school promotes community links well for the children to appreciate the work of the fire and police services, the Cannock Chase Rangers, and representatives of local businesses visit school. The children are taught the social skills of working together through participating in a range of classroom groupings, and through a very effective personal, health and social education programme. These developments are not so strong for the youngest children who still show immaturity when confronted with the needs of others.
34. The cultural provision is good and would be very good if pupils were given opportunities to gain a personal experience of some of the other cultures of modern Britain. Opportunities to develop an appreciation of their own culture are very good. They have many visits within their own locality. Museums, art galleries, three local churches, the Cannock Heritage Centre, the Science Discovery Park and other locations for learning, such as local farms and local shops, are all used effectively. The programme of visits is supported by many visitors to school, including theatre groups, a storyteller, crafts-persons, musicians. Church leaders are regular visitors to school and all classes have a programme of visits to the local churches. The provisions for an understanding of other cultures and beliefs is good in terms of using resources but does not provide children with the chance to gain first-hand experience.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

35. Standards of pastoral care are excellent and enable pupils to work in an exceptionally supportive learning environment in which they achieve well and make very good progress. The commitment of all adults to pupils' well being ensures that they experience exemplary levels of care and that their individual needs are particularly well met.

36. Excellent procedures are in place to ensure the health, safety and general well being of pupils. The headteacher has a very clear vision of the type of school environment she wishes to create and she carefully ensures that all the adults associated with the school have equally supportive aims. These outstanding expectations for the highest quality support trickle inexorably through each layer of the school's provision and ensure that every pupil benefits. Support and welfare staff offer invaluable help to pupils every day. The senior welfare assistant sets the standard and oversees first class systems coupled with an outstandingly warm and caring attitude to pupils and their needs. Staff constantly encourage pupils to do their absolute best in all situations. They continue this 'mentoring' role informally as they chat to them, for example, during a walk along a corridor, about what they did during a session and how happy they must feel about their success. Adults leave pupils no room to feel sorry for themselves but provide well-focused positive reinforcement about everything they do. This is the key to the success that pupils achieve.
37. Equally high standards of care are evident in all aspects of the school's child protection procedures. The headteacher is responsible for this area and she ensures that all staff have access to the most up to date local authority guidance. She and the staff spend considerable time meeting the needs of the most vulnerable pupils in the school. As a consequence, these children receive support from many different agencies and are offered every opportunity to participate fully in the life of the school, both academic and social. Families are offered guidance and the headteacher spends considerable time completing documentation and attending case conferences.
38. Staff work very well as a team to promote very good behaviour among all pupils. The school has identified behaviour management as a priority area. Every member of staff, including administrative and supervisory personnel, was invited to staff training sessions on the school's expectations. To their credit, all adults working in the school attended this training and the results are clear. The very good standards of behaviour found throughout the school are a direct result of extremely consistent behaviour management by all adults. The positive atmosphere found in the dining hall and playground is a direct result of adults taking time to talk to pupils, finding out what they need and then responding to these needs. Pupils know that their interactions with any adult on the school site will be following the same very high standards. No instances of unacceptable behaviour were seen during the inspection. Clear procedures are in place to deal with any rare instances that may arise.
39. Very effective procedures are in place to promote good attendance among pupils. The school makes its policies on attendance and punctuality very clear to parents when their children first join the school, but a significant number of children still take holidays during term time. Regular meetings between the headteacher and the local education welfare officer ensure that problems are managed and that appropriate and speedy action is taken to resolve attendance related issues with parents. Registers are carefully maintained and statistics are regularly recorded and offered to the governing body for analysis. The headteacher is a visible presence outside the school at the start of the school day and this helps her to maintain communication with parents and resolve issues speedily.
40. Very effective levels of support are offered to pupils with special educational needs and for the few children who speak a language other than English at home. Individual education plans are drawn up and discussed with parents and these are used very effectively to support planning for pupils in lessons. Support staff work extremely well

with class teachers to help pupils make the most of any learning opportunities they encounter.

41. The school maintains very good procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development. There is a comprehensive induction programme and detailed records of achievement are compiled throughout the year to ensure a full picture is created of what each child can do. Personal, social and academic targets are discussed regularly with parents and very informative comments on these areas form part of the end of year progress report to parents. Staff track progress very carefully and, where necessary, additional support is offered to pupils who experience particular problems.
42. An exceptionally good example of this is the Nurture Group with its current focus on a number of reception children. The group is overseen by a class teacher with particular expertise in this field, but it is led by two classroom assistants who have specific interest in this area. The headteacher, a teacher and one assistant have undertaken training on the role of nurture groups and the school uses the system to encourage pupils to take turns, share and increase their confidence and self esteem in group situations, as well as to improve academically. During the inspection, members of the group were able to tell their peers about any specific news they wished to share as they worked individually with an adult and also co-operated with others in a group activity. The personal and social benefits of these sessions are clear and they also offer opportunities for children to consolidate literacy and numeracy skills. All the children in the group enjoyed the session; they chatted to each other in role-play areas and worked alongside each other during games and activities. They showed considerable levels of self-discipline and observed social conventions extremely well. The headteacher strongly supports the nurture group and ensures it has adequate funding. The role of nurturing blends extremely well with the caring and supportive nature of the school.
43. The procedures and systems for assessing the pupils' attainment and progress have significantly improved since the last inspection. The system for monitoring progress in English mathematics and science is extremely good. The pupils are assessed regularly and the data is used to chart their progress during the year and from year to year. Using the data, the school is able to set extremely accurate targets for each year group. In addition, class work is regularly assessed and all the pupils from reception know precisely what they need to do to raise their standards. Group targets are set, for example, to improve aspects of writing skills. These targets are written into the children's books. Progress towards them is regularly monitored by the children themselves and by the staff. The pupils and staff also discuss the children's progress with their parents. They are all thoroughly involved and the system successfully helps to raise standards. The school development plan indicates that this system is ready to be developed for all the other subjects as they are reviewed.
44. There are very good assessment systems in place to establish the children's standards in the areas of learning when they enter the nursery. Their progress is monitored against the nationally recommended learning steps. This system continues in reception and the school is easily able to assess how much progress children have made during their time in the nursery or during the whole of the Foundation Stage. When the children enter reception their standards and progress are assessed using a nationally recommended scheme. This also provides the school with clear information about the children's progress in reception when the children are reassessed before going into Year 1.



45. Each year there is an extremely thorough analysis of the national test results in reading, writing and mathematics and the teachers' assessments in science. Changes to the curriculum and the teaching are made as a result, for example with writing. The headteacher and the deputy, analyse the school's results, comparing them with national standards and with those achieved by similar schools. They collect evidence to ensure that their pupils keep on target.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

46. Parents have positive views of the school. In particular, they agree that their children make good progress, that the teaching is good, that the school has high expectations and is led and managed well. They feel that the school is helping their children to become mature. A number of parents expressed concern about the lack of extra curricular activities, the amount of homework set, how closely the school works with parents and how well informed they feel about their children's progress. Inspectors agree with all their positive opinions. The only valid area of parental concern found during the inspection is that of the limited programme of extra-curricular activities that could be used to enrich the curriculum and extend the children's social skills.
47. The school establishes good links with parents and encourages them to be involved in school life and in what their children are learning. A well considered induction programme enables parents to meet staff and to learn about the school's philosophy and routines in order to prepare their children more effectively for school life. The home school agreement sets out the school's expectations very clearly and provides a strong framework for parents to follow. The school is proactive in introducing new ideas to interest parents, for example, adult education courses. Regular newsletters, curriculum information and general notices are sent to parents and informative displays are visible around the school. These provide parents with all the necessary detail they require. The school's prospectus and governors' annual report to parents are both useful documents. The latter is particularly impressive as all the governors contribute to it and make reference to their individual areas of expertise. The school makes sure that it canvasses parental opinion each year and, unusually, invites parents to put forward suggestions for the school development plan review.
48. Very good quality written and verbal information is available to parents throughout the school year. Clear directions are given to parents about the best time to contact class teachers so that they may give their undivided attention to parental concerns. The headteacher's simple strategy of being available outside school each morning is very effective and parents are able to chat to her about problems while she also monitors punctuality and chivvies stragglers. Staff are very knowledgeable about the children they teach. They invite parents to share this information at regular parents' evenings where pupils' targets are set, reviewed and amended. Unfortunately, not all parents take up these invitations. Well documented record of achievement files are also compiled by staff. Parents are encouraged to send in certificates and photographs from home to supplement school records. The school makes every effort to keep parents well informed about the progress their children make. The end of year written reports are valuable documents. They contain very good quality, evaluative comments and provide parents with a very clear picture of what their child can do and what they need to do next to improve.
49. Parents make a sound contribution to the life of the school and to their children's learning. The majority of parents ensure their children come to school regularly and on time. They complete reading records and are happy to come into school to participate in special celebrations. Some parents attend adult education classes

organised by the school in conjunction with a local college but sometimes lack of parental interest means these courses do not run. When parents do commit themselves to a course, positive results follow. For example, one mother who attended a literacy course has had a significant impact on her child's reading, which has improved markedly over the past few months. The school has an active parents' association and parental support of a variety of events led to the purchase of additional learning resources that support pupils' learning.

## **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

50. This school is led and managed very well. Some aspects of the headteacher's leadership are excellent. In particular the improvements the school has made since the last inspection. Although there are still areas appropriately identified for development, all the earlier weaknesses have been removed and many additional aspects have received strong and very successful attention.
51. The extremely clear leadership from the headteacher and senior staff ensures the school moves forward rapidly. The results of the Year 2 tests over the past four years, show that the children learn at a very good rate during their time in the school. Writing and science, which have both been weaker subjects, have now reached above average levels alongside reading and mathematics. The school has clearly identified all the aspects of provision that influence the standards and has very effectively linked them together in the school development plan. For example, the very good teaching is focused on what the children need to learn next in literacy, numeracy and science because of excellent assessment strategies. Monitoring of lessons has identified weaker provision for aspects of the basic skills, of writing for example, and intensive staff training has improved the teachers' knowledge and raised standards. Other subjects, where the children reach average standards, such as art, ICT and geography, are identified for development in the near future. This close link between the higher standards and the school's programme of improvement highlights the effective results of the training.
52. Through an analysis of the quality of teaching and learning the headteacher and senior staff have identified an excellent system for moving the school forward. This includes observing the teaching, sometimes alongside an outside specialist, and identifying necessary developments. The curriculum leader and headteacher receive focused training and prepare a detailed action plan. The staff are involved and new strategies for teaching and learning are put in place and monitored. The whole staff are regularly involved in this process and have formed an extremely strong commitment to improvement. The staff feel considerable satisfaction when they see the children making such rapid progress because of earlier, successful developments. The school is confident that those subjects needing improvement will be successfully managed in the same way.
53. Those teachers with responsibilities for developing subjects or aspects of provision work very hard to put the school system for improvement into place. These initiatives have extremely clear guidance from senior staff to steer improvements and as a result successes have been guaranteed. In physical education, for example, the coordinator has effectively developed the way work is planned and standards are recorded. The Foundation Stage coordinator has strongly supported the development of the new nursery while providing scope for the nursery team leader to take the initiative with many aspects. This has proved most successful and the nursery children make very good progress. The coordinator for English and assessment, the deputy headteacher, has worked very effectively to improve standards in writing after

accurately identifying the weaknesses. She has provided the school with excellent strategies for assessing progress in English and brought together assessment procedures in mathematics and science to form a consistent school system. Further work to extend assessment strategies to all the other subjects has been planned for the autumn term. The teaching of mathematics is monitored regularly and evaluations of the work identify the impact on children's learning. Several subject leaders are still developing these skills and though they are effective they still have some aspects to develop further. The headteacher keeps a close watch on the developments in each area. She has assumed leadership of subjects and aspects, for example, the developments of the nursery and reception classes, during the extended absence of the coordinator. In this way absences have not slowed developments.

54. The experienced special educational needs coordinator is very skilled and has ensured that the provision has remained at a high level. She has identified that some targets in learning plans need to be more specific and plans are already in place to provide training for all staff. She regularly monitors children's progress and prepares thoroughly for annual reviews. The partnership between the special educational needs coordinator and head teacher is very effective, they have a close working relationship with all the outside agencies. Nothing is left to chance and this ensures the children make very good progress.
55. The governors' involvement in supporting the school is good. This is an improvement since the last inspection. They keep up-to-date with developments and provide strong support to the headteacher and staff. There is, for example, a link governor for the key subjects and aspects such as literacy, numeracy, both the nursery and reception classes and special needs. Governors' personal and professional strengths are used well. They support areas such as the education of the youngest children, health and safety, special educational needs, pupil welfare, community links and budget management. The governors are very involved and knowledgeable about the provision made by the school, and provide the coordinators with good support. Some governors work in the school and the chair of governors visits often to show support and find out about the work of the school. Governors search for reasons for the average, rather than above average standards and hold the school accountable by questioning some reports and documents presented to them. This has resulted in occasional rewrites for the staff as governors draw attention to gaps or ambiguities. The governors work together to write their annual report for parents. This is a good, clear document that describes the work of the school well.
56. Management and control of the school's budget are very good. The governors' finance committee monitors spending closely and has identified that an apparent underspend was due to a mismatch between the financial year and the school year. The school seeks extra budgets whenever possible, such as the government initiative to provide nursery provision through the 'Sure Start' scheme and the 'Nurture Group'. All the money is used very well. The school is absorbing almost all of its saving this year to maintain the high numbers of support staff. There are ample good quality resources to teach all subjects and there is a good range of books to support the literacy strategy.
57. The office manager gives very good support in the day-to-day running of the school. Modern technology is used most effectively to review the budget and provide correspondence. The school has electronic contact with the local authority. Assessment analysis is rapidly provided in a very clear format so that the school can check on progress. The school's resources are managed very well. The school applies the principles of best value well in seeking the opinion of parents and pupils

and in ensuring money is spent carefully and successfully. The school compares its performance with others and works very hard to perform better each year.

58. The school has had considerable disturbances to the teaching staff over the past two years and during the inspection there were two temporary reception teachers. This inevitably affects the work of the children although the very strong systems in place reduce problems to a minimum. Support staff make an excellent contribution to the pupils' learning. New teachers receive exceedingly clear guidance when they are introduced into the procedures of the school. The accommodation is good overall. The premises are very clean and tidy throughout and are very well maintained by the caretaker, site supervisor and cleaning staff.

### **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

59. There are no key issues for action but the headteacher, staff and governors should consider the following points for inclusion in their development plan:
- a. Extend the pupils' personal contact with other cultures. (paragraph 34)
  - b. Further improve the average standards in art and design, ICT, geography and design and technology through extending, as planned, the assessment strategies to include all curriculum subjects. (paragraph 43)
  - c. Extend, as planned, developments to support the children's standards in spoken English and social skills in the nursery and reception classes. (paragraphs 1, 10, 33)
  - d. Provide a wider range of activities outside lessons. (paragraphs 26, 33)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	48
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	62

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	7	19	18	4	0	0	0
Percentage	15	40	38	8	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than two percentage points.

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	23	187
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	37

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	3	46

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	5

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	10
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	19

### Attendance

Authorised absence

%
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Unauthorised absence

%
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School data	5.8
National comparative data	5.6

School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

*Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.*

## Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2001	36	37	73

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	32	31	34
	Girls	35	33	35
	Total	67	64	69
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (80)	88 (86)	95 (88)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	32	32	33
	Girls	34	34	34
	Total	66	66	67
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (81)	90 (88)	92 (93)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

## Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	0
Any other minority ethnic group	1

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

## Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	1	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.





## Teachers and classes

### Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.4
Average class size	23

### Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked per week	223

### Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	0
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	66
Number of pupils per FTE adult	11.5

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	6

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0.5
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Financial information

Financial year	2001
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	£
Total income	458099
Total expenditure	465755
Expenditure per pupil	2426
Balance brought forward from previous year	90730
Balance carried forward to next year	83074

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	230
Number of questionnaires returned	108

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	64	31	5	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	59	39	2	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	45	49	2	1	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	31	53	11	1	4
The teaching is good.	64	32	0	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	46	37	12	2	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	64	31	3	3	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	65	34	0	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	41	44	13	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	54	44	1	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	56	44	1	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	21	39	18	8	14

Percentages are rounded to the nearest integer and may not total 100.



## **PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM**

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

60. The school has a new nursery class that opened in September 2001. The nursery was provided through Local Authority and school funding together with a government grant that supports children in areas of social deprivation. The staff are both well qualified nursery nurses. When the children started in the nursery their standards were well below average in all areas of learning apart from physical development, which was below average and aspects of personal and social development, which were poor. They have made very good progress during the year, particularly in mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development where their standards are above average. The children have reached average standards in most of the other areas of learning apart from aspects of their personal development and in spoken language.
61. In reception there are three classes and in one of these two teachers job-share. Of the total of four teachers two were absent during the inspection. The current reception children had very little pre-school experience and also started in September with well below average standards overall. They are now reaching above average standards in mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development. Their standards in reading and writing are average but their spoken language is weaker. Like the nursery children, their standards in some aspects of personal development are below average. Their achievement is very good. This is an improvement since the time of the last inspection.
62. The provision in the nursery and reception classes is now very good. The children feel secure and happy and have settled very well into the daily routines. Some children start school with very immature behaviour and show considerable vulnerability. The school runs an excellent 'nurture group' for these children for part of three afternoons each week. The sessions help the children gain confidence and feel important. They settle down well in this group and are strongly supported to cope with the bustle of everyday reception life. The provision for outdoor play is good and has been considerably improved for the reception children since the last inspection when it was unsatisfactory. The staff make good use of the outdoor equipment and the nursery and reception children work at appropriately challenging tasks in their own outdoor areas. This aspect of the curriculum is carefully planned for the children and their learning opportunities are organised well although there are fewer experiences linked to managing large resources than there could be.
63. The assessments made when the children start in both the nursery and reception classes are very detailed and thorough. Very clear on-going assessments play a regular part in planning for the children's development. The staff monitor what the children can do to see how much progress they have made and record the standards they have reached. The procedures provide good information for the staff and are used well. The teacher who coordinates the Foundation Stage has a very clear understanding of how to improve the provision and has introduced good developments. She is an effective coordinator who has identified the need to improve the children's standards in spoken language and this work is due to begin soon. The nursery staff plan together, building on earlier learning according to assessments made the previous week. The four reception teachers plan the children's work together and also use assessments to identify activities to build on the children's learning. The teachers have introduced the infant curriculum for those children who

are ready to use it and assess their progress against the National Curriculum early levels. These strategies are extremely effective and have speeded progress for the vast majority of the children.

64. There are several children in the nursery and reception classes who speak English as an additional language. These pupils are given very good support both in class lessons and in smaller groups. They are helped to talk about their everyday activities and taught the vocabulary linked to the curriculum. They are making very good progress. Children with special educational needs are given very good support.

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

65. Children quickly gain confidence in their classes and learn to make friendly approaches both to one another and to adults. There are opportunities for nursery and reception children to socialise informally with one another or with adults in small groups. In all the classes the behaviour of the children is very good. The warm, friendly and supportive approach of the adults creates a positive response from the children who try very hard to please.
66. In both nursery and reception classes, most of the children are reaching the standard expected for their age in many areas of personal development but still show considerable immaturity in their social development. They do not always know how to respond in social situations. They play alongside each other and watch what other children are doing. In the sand, for example, one girl successfully made a sand pie and was copied by several others attempting the same activity. However none of the children spoke to each other during this time. In reception the children work happily and in a few cases talk about what they are doing. Two reception children colouring pictures for example, spoke about the colours they needed but did not know how to ask each other to pass crayons. Very few showed and explained things to each other. When using the role-play area they quickly helped themselves to favourite hats representing characters. Later, when using the computer, they retained the hats because they found sharing very difficult.
67. The teaching is very good in both the nursery and reception and the children make very good progress from a low start. The nurture group strongly supports the reception children whose social skills are low. Children settle into the nursery quickly and are secure and confident with adults. Most children play happily alongside one another and they concentrate well on activities for a reasonable length of time. The children's independence and social skills are developed through a range of useful activities. In the nursery they choose what activities they will do and sometimes tell the rest of the class what they have done. In the reception classes, the children concentrate on their work and complete short tasks without support.

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

68. The children reach the standards expected for their age in reading, writing and listening but are below average in speaking. They achieve at a good rate. The teaching in this area is very good overall in both the reception and nursery, although it is less strong in developing spoken language. The staff provide an appropriate range of play opportunities where the children can talk together and chat with the adults and each other in a relaxed situation. The staff sometimes engage the children in conversation. However, they ask many questions and although the children try to answer, there are too few opportunities for chat with adults during focused activities. Staff teach new vocabulary linked to the topic they are introducing very well. The

nursery children were learning about transport during the inspection week. They were asked to talk about their computer drawings and guess what each other had drawn. None of the children were able to pose a question, although they indicated their guesses through statements such as 'it's a van'. More direct demonstrations from the staff and repetitions from the children would extend this part of their learning. The children rarely engage each other in conversations during their play activities. They tend to use language to ensure they have what they need and to answer direct questions from the staff. Very patient and persistent repetition from the nursery staff has ensured the children listen well and take note of instructions. In the reception classes, the children receive very clear and careful instructions that enable them to complete tasks without further support.

69. The nursery children are introduced to books through story times and reading sessions. They also have good opportunities to explore books for themselves, sometimes with an adult alongside. These are useful and effective occasions. The children understand that the books contain enjoyable information and most pretend to read while playing, for example, in the role-play travel agents. During carpet play one girl copied the senior nursery nurse in telling the story of a bus that fell into a hole. Other children acted out the events using toys. The 'reader' turned the pages of the book, used the pictures to guide her and was able to remember parts of the story. On this occasion language was used to direct the actions of others as she led her friends through the book. The children have made very good progress with writing their names. On entry few could form any letters and most children scribbled in a circular motion when using a pencil. Now all can write their name legibly, using their name cards, and some can write this independently. The children form the letters correctly and recognise the familiar letters in books or labels around the room.
70. In the reception class the staff teach reading very effectively. The children work in small groups and sometimes read individually. They recognise simple words and can work out many new words by sounding out the letters. They remember new words very well. The staff show children how to handle books and evidently enjoy the stories themselves. As a result the children handle books confidently and are familiar with the layout. Early writing skills are taught very effectively through an appropriate range of play and direct teaching activities. The teachers are skilled at linking reading with writing through the sounds that letters make and show the children how to spell out words to use in sentences. The children have become used to writing for different purposes such as their own news, short stories, lists and labels for pictures.

### **Mathematical development**

71. The children make very good progress. They start from a low level and by the end of the Foundation Stage their standards are above average. Teaching of mathematics in the nursery and reception classes is very good and staff provide a range of practical and more formal opportunities to develop children's skills and understanding. In the nursery, equipment and activities are freely available and the children can explore ideas. For example, when playing with the train they are shown that someone has many more carriages than others. They talk about the quantity, of eggs in a singing game, for example, and refer to a wide range of shapes such as rectangle and hexagon. Some of these activities are structured and the staff work with the children helping them count. During these sessions the children count forwards and backwards and they watch the staff and confidently follow their lead. Children experiment with capacity when playing with the water but few are yet able to talk about what they are doing. They all enjoy singing number songs and rhymes and try to work out the number that comes next.

72. By the end of the reception year, the children are beginning to learn to add and subtract to ten in practical ways. They are able to understand about number positions and how to identify a missing number by referring to its place in a sequence. For example, they can say that '11 is missing because it should come after 10 and it isn't there'. Few children find this easy, but all try very hard and during one lesson some lower ability children were able to identify and explain about numbers below ten. Children make good progress in understanding about the simple repeating patterns and can replicate them using sticky paper or in paint when printing. Many children are able to explain what they have done and why. For example, one boy described how he had used three shapes in his pattern and had spread them out to fill the strip of paper rather than finish with only part of the sequence. The higher attaining children realised they needed to separate objects as they counted them or they would get muddled and count some twice. These children were counting higher than 20 and arranging counters in lines of ten with any remainder on a separate line. The tasks offered to different groups of children are well matched to their different levels of understanding.

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

73. Children make very good progress in this area and are exceeding the expected standard at the end of reception. Teaching is very good in both the nursery and reception. Staff plan a wide range of interesting activities to help extend children's learning and work hard to provide an interesting and practical range of experiences. In the nursery, children explore natural materials such as sand and water. These are linked to work on boats and undersea creatures and they can practise and play out ideas introduced by the staff. They move creatures through the water and select from a range of boats. Much of their play revolves around sinking the boats by filling them with water. The children use the computer with an appropriate level of skill to draw pictures and show considerable development by typing their names. Explanations are clear and the children are encouraged to question to help them to better understand what is going on. The children planted vegetable seeds earlier in the year and after harvesting some of their crop they eagerly showed their parents what had grown. The staff introduced a good range of vocabulary that helped the children try and explain what they did.
74. The children in the reception class are working from a blend of the National Curriculum and the later stages of the reception curriculum. They now have lessons linked to subjects such as religious education, science, history and geography. In religious education, for example they are learning the Bible story about the loaves and fishes. The teacher very cleverly led them through a dramatised story that helped the children consider the miracle. They washed their hands and shared out bread after discussing how a small quantity could be spread so widely as in the story. They found the idea impossible to understand. One child said, 'Five thousand people and only a little food but everyone had something to eat.' This very good opportunity helped the children reflect deeply on spiritual matters. In science lessons the children learn practically about physical processes such as magnetism and in geography they trace their journey on a map following a visit to a fairyland park. The children reach average standards in using the computers. They can control the mouse appropriately and complete tasks. Some subjects are not supported well by the programs and the school has already identified this as an area for improvement.

### **Physical development**

75. When children start in the nursery, their attainment in this area is average in the management of large movements, such as coordinating their movements when carrying large objects. It is below average in finer movements, for example, when they manipulate small objects such as scissors and pencils. Through very good provision and teaching, they achieve well and reach above average standards in all areas of their physical development by the end of reception. Some children show a high level of precision when cutting and drawing, for example. They refine their skills through work and play in the classroom and through physical education lessons in the hall. The staff provide plenty of opportunities for the children to practise their manipulative skills through using a good range of tools, equipment and materials. They cut out in art lessons and manipulate small toys. They show good pencil control and this builds up their confidence and skill.
76. The children in both classes use the outside areas for regular sessions to carry and manipulate heavy objects such as the watering can or scooters. This provision could be further improved through providing large objects, linked to most areas of learning, for the children to learn to manage. During games and gymnastics lessons in the hall the nursery staff use excellent strategies to teach the children how to understand how exercise affects their body. The activities require much energy and the children feel their heart beating before and after exercise. Excellent teaching in reception enabled the children to organise the large apparatus and use it to demonstrate very good balancing skills they had practised earlier on the floor.

### **Creative development**

77. Children's attainment when they enter school is well below the level expected for their age. The very good teaching leads to very good achievement in music, drama and art. In imagining situations and making up events the standards are average when the children leave reception. The teachers provide role-play situations. For example, in the nursery there is a travel agent and in reception the Three Bears Cottage. The children are unsure how to pretend to be someone else, although the reception children repeat familiar phrases from the story and thoroughly enjoy the headbands naming characters. The nursery children play with the resources such as the telephone and note pads with evident enjoyment but show very little understanding of role-play. Across the classes, the children find it hard to organise themselves as they create imaginary situations. There are good opportunities for the children to paint and draw and they are learning to explore the resources to create their own version of the task. Their completed work shows flair and very good use of the resources to portray dinosaurs, for example in the nursery and self portraits or collage plants in reception. The children have many opportunities to sing and play instruments and reach above average standards in reception.

### **ENGLISH**

78. An early review of test results for this year (2002) indicates that there has been good improvement, particularly for the higher attaining children. In Year 2, the standards in both reading and writing are now above average. These children have made very good progress since they entered school with below average standards.
79. The coordinator (the deputy headteacher) leads the subject extremely well. She has identified weaknesses in the work of the school and has developed strategies to raise standards, particularly in writing. All the teachers and support staff have received training in a different way of approaching the teaching of writing. This includes sessions called 'talking to write' and classes have established 'talking partners'.



These two methods ensure the children have regular opportunities to discuss their ideas before they write. There is also a weekly lesson for extended writing and extra support staff are provided to help the children. The teaching of English is now very good and one lesson observed was excellent. The classroom assistants are involved in assessing the children's progress and work closely with teachers. They provide an especially caring relationship with the more vulnerable children and give excellent support.

80. Children of all abilities now make very good progress in writing. Regular assessments by teachers and classroom assistants ensure the children's targets are relevant and speed up progress. The staff are good at teaching writing and make it exciting and interesting for the children. In a Year 1 lesson the children 'brainstormed' ideas in small groups, each led by an adult who led the children away from mundane words. The staff used a rich and wide vocabulary to promote the children's interest in new words. They encouraged them to choose interesting and descriptive words such as 'twinkled' and 'foamed'. The children were taught to group their ideas into sections describing 'who', 'where', 'what happened', and were shown how the story line could be built up. Their individual writing showed the benefits of this approach, when lines developed such as 'I opened the shell and out came the Sea King covered in spray'. The teacher provided an exciting context for the writing as well as ensuring that the children had vocabulary prompts and check lists for them to proof read their work. In a Year 2 lesson, children talked through ideas in pairs and then planned their story using words, phrases and illustrations. When they were happy with the plan, they began to write their stories. In all the classes, there is a strong sense of children being 'authors'.
81. All the rooms have writing areas and the Year 1 classes have structured play areas such as 'The Florist Shop'. This gives the children many opportunities to write for different purposes such as, posters, gift cards, orders for flowers for a birthday gift. In both reading and writing the children have a wide range of opportunities to use their skills in other subjects such as science and religious education. In Year 1 they have written about the life cycle of a sunflower and put annotations on their diagrams. In Year 2 the children wrote thank you letters following their visit to Bethany Baptist Church.
82. Speaking and listening is taught very well. The children are good and sometimes very good listeners. In a Year 1 lesson the children practiced asking each other questions while preparing to write. The talk ranged considerably in sophistication. One child asked, for example, 'Can I help you'? A lower attaining child replied 'Yes you can', while a higher attainer answered 'Yes, dig a little hole in the sand over here please'. During this session, the children showed they knew how to alter their voice intonation when asking a question or making an exclamation. When they went on to write, using speech bubbles, the higher attaining children wrote their sentences quickly and confidently adding the correct punctuation. In Year 2, the partner talk is further developed and the children worked together to construct an alternative ending to the story 'Amphiby Ann'. They consulted each other and often negotiated changes. They said that it is useful to have a 'talk' partner; it makes their work easier and better. As well as these more formal opportunities the children are expected to apply their talking and listening skills in all subjects of the curriculum. For example, in a music lesson in Year 2, the children shared opinions about whether the quality of sound created by a maraca was good enough to portray gently falling rain.
83. Most children are enthusiastic readers. They have a good understanding of letter sounds, which helps them with new words. In all classes reading skills are taught

very well and the records, which teachers keep to monitor progress, are excellent. They show exactly what each child can do. The teachers know precisely what the child needs to learn next and discuss these targets with the children. This system is leading to high standards. The children are taught to read with improving accuracy. As a result when their reading doesn't make sense, they stop and seek to correct themselves automatically. The teachers provide a wide range of texts, including stories and non-fiction. The children show a good understanding of how these texts work, for example, they talk about settings, plot, characters and events. Pupils are helped to decide the type of books they prefer or identify a favourite author. One lower attaining child, who liked funny books, chuckled as he recalled events in the book and his reading became very much more expressive when he re-read those passages.

84. The children use books well to find information in such subjects as history. In a Year 1 lesson, based on the non-fiction book 'Our Whale Watching Trip', the children used good comprehension skills to identify useful information. By the time they are seven most children confidently use the contents and index accurately and can explain why these are useful when searching for information. The reading skills of the lower attaining children and those with special educational needs are weaker, but the children are well supported by carefully structured programmes and knowledgeable support staff. The resources to support reading are very good. All classrooms have attractive well-organised reading areas. There is a wide range of fiction, non-fiction and poetry books, as well as a range of taped stories and poems. All the children regularly take books home to read. Many parents support their children's reading development well by listening to them read and writing comments, usually very positive, in their reading notebooks. Library monitors, drawn from Year 2, show a good understanding of why the Dewey system of classifying books is useful. They know their work is important in ensuring that books are correctly shelved.
85. Programmes such as 'Early Literacy Support' and the 'Family Learning Initiative' have helped raise standards. Many pupils with special educational needs acquire literacy skills at a slower rate than average, however, they do make very good progress towards the targets set for them. Teachers and support staff take very good account of the individual learning plans in lessons. Work, both for these children and those with English as an additional language, is very carefully structured and is based on thorough and accurate assessments of what the children can do and of what they need to do next. There is a strong sense of partnership between parents, governors, and the junior school. They all took part in National Book Week recently and read stories to the children. Year 1 children have watched a puppet show performed by secondary pupils. Events such as these present a very positive image of the subject.

## **MATHEMATICS**

86. Since the last inspection, results have greatly improved and the detailed assessments completed by the school indicate that this improvement is likely to continue. An early review of test results for this year (2002) indicates that the almost forty per cent of the current Year 2 children have above average standards and few fall below average. There is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls throughout the school.
87. The school has managed the improvements to the standards and progress extremely well. The National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented very successfully. Teaching and support staff have received very effective training and are knowledgeable about the recommendations. Lessons are always planned very effectively to focus on aspects identified through assessments, which the children

need to learn next. The targets for the lessons are always discussed with them at the beginning of the lesson. The coordination of the subject is excellent. The subject leader (the headteacher) is most effective and has worked very well to improve the standards. For example, she has monitored all of the teaching to see where improvements could be made and has supported staff as they changed their practice. There is now very good teaching throughout the school in almost all lessons. An excellent assessment system identifies what the children need to learn next and they work to specific targets. Results of tests are carefully analysed to see where pupils could achieve better. The children's behaviour and attitudes are very good and they are willing learners. Resources for the subject are very good.

88. Pupils with special educational needs and those pupils with English as an additional language make very good progress in developing their number skills in relation to their abilities. This is because the teachers plan work at the right level for them and they receive very good support from the classroom assistants. For example, in a lesson in Year 1, when the lower attaining group were adding three one digit numbers together, the classroom assistant supported the group well with questions such as, 'where do we begin?' and 'which is the biggest number?' to help the children learn skills to use in the future. This enabled them to take part fully in the lesson and their self-esteem was raised by the praise and encouragement they received.
89. Pupils' very good achievement in Years 1 and 2 is directly linked to the very good teaching. Teachers know the children well and have formed excellent relationships with them. This encourages the pupils to work hard in order to please their teachers and feel successful. Teachers set challenging tasks for all the children, including the more able ones. In a very good lesson in Year 2, two higher attaining pupils worked at a more difficult level than the rest of their group. This gave them the opportunity to arrange and rearrange the patterns of multiples of five, finally ordering them by size even though some multiples were missing. This was very challenging but much enjoyed by the children. Pupils are taught a wide range of calculation strategies and are encouraged to explain how they worked out answers. In a very good lesson in Year 1, for example, the teacher was heard to say, 'How did you work that out? Tell the rest of the class!' By the time pupils reach the age of seven, they have a good understanding of number skills. They can add and subtract accurately and can halve and double two digit numbers. They recognise and can name common two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes such as cube, cylinder and sphere.
90. A particular strength is the mental arithmetic part at the beginning of the lesson. Teachers use resources such as number sticks very well to help the children understand. Children are keen to tell their answers to the rest of the class. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and ask challenging, open-ended questions to consolidate the children's previous learning. This was seen in a Year 2 class when the children were reinforcing their knowledge of the five times table. The teacher's questions ensured that there was very good new learning and application of previous learning by asking such questions as, 'What will happen to the number? Is the answer getting bigger? Why?' Challenging new learning is taught very well and the lessons have good pace so that children remain on task and sustain concentration throughout. For example, in Year 1 even though the children used newly learned strategies of doubling numbers before counting on, they still completed an appropriate number of sums during the lesson. Teachers know the children well and their day-to-day assessment procedures ensure that the children's learning is moving forward well in careful but rapid steps. Very good use is made of the classroom assistants who support groups well in all the lessons and assess what the children have understood.

91. All areas of mathematics are taught well and opportunities are given for the pupils to extend their mathematical knowledge while using their mathematics in different situations. ICT is being used appropriately to support children's learning in some lessons. Pupils use carefully selected programs to help them develop their mathematical skills. Mathematics is used to support the learning in other areas of the curriculum through arranging information, for example in geography and in ordering, counting and measuring in design and technology.

## **SCIENCE**

92. The children in Year 2 reach standards that are above average. This is a very good improvement on the below average standards of three years ago. The school identified an excellent improvement programme that included introducing an effective assessment system, monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning, and staff training, especially for scientific investigation. This has been achieved by very good leadership of the coordinator supported by the head teacher. The children's very good behaviour and their positive attitudes to learning also contribute significantly to the improvement in standards.
93. Science is taught well. Lessons are planned with clear objectives that are explained to the children. Good use is made of investigation and practical activities to help the children's understanding in all the aspects of science. Pupils are taught to make accurate predictions and are expected to work independently when carrying out investigations. As a result they have learned to draw their own conclusion from the evidence. For example, a Year 2 pupil had been investigating the effects of a light upon shadows. Whilst other pupils noticed the effects on the shadow's size he observed that his shadow appeared to be holding a pencil in the opposite hand. His observation was well received by the teacher when marking his work. The children voice their ideas and suggestions confidently and listen courteously to the ideas of others. They undertake investigations well and handle equipment and specimens with care. For example, Year 2 pupils treated pond creatures collected from a field study with great care and respect. This followed discussions they had had in a religious education lesson and was a very good link with another subject. Their work is well presented. They draw careful illustrations and work quickly. The more able pupils set out their work independently.
94. The teachers question the children skilfully and build very well on earlier learning and the knowledge and understanding that the pupils bring to the lesson. Resources are used effectively, for example, when a Year 1 class was investigating sounds the teacher used a range of alarms within a closed box for the pupils to identify. This made a stimulating introduction to the lesson and the pupils' interest was maintained throughout the activity. The pupils like the subject and respond well to the practical activities and fieldwork. They have a very good attitude to the subject. They listen attentively, work well together, respond well to questioning and can explain why things happen as well as what they have observed.
95. Assessment is used very well. The school uses a range of commercial assessment schemes and assesses practical tasks. Classroom assistants record pupils' responses to key questions in oral work and notes are made of advances in learning. Assessment is further supported by effective classroom intervention and effective marking strategies to develop pupils' understanding. The work is well matched to pupils' ability. The work of children with special needs is well supported by teachers and classroom assistants, and they make good progress.

96. The subject is very well led. Having worked hard to improve standards the coordinator now monitors the teaching and learning of investigative science and advises other teachers when necessary. The school's scheme of work, in part based upon national advice, gives excellent coverage of the required content. The resources are good and are being improved further.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

97. Standards are average overall and the children make satisfactory progress. This is the same as at the time of the last inspection. The children cover an appropriate curriculum that includes good opportunities to develop above average skills with paint, pastels and pencils. They have opportunities to experience some work with textiles and clay but their standards in these areas, while satisfactory, are lower. There is no assessment procedure to support the work in art and this omission has contributed to the uneven balance of skills learned by the children.
98. They combine drawing media well and achieve thoughtful and attractive pieces of work. In Year 2, recent work was based on the art of David Hockney. The children used pencil and pastel to interpret a small drawing with great sensitivity and individuality. They also used vibrant colours to make large abstract patterns. This is above average work; it is detailed and imaginative and shows a confident use of media. The teachers draw attention to the changing styles of the artist and encourage the children to experiment rather than merely copy. In Year 1 the children also reach above average standards in their drawing and painting. Their design and technology drawings are detailed and careful with all moving parts identified. Their paintings, based on the work of Van Gogh, show a thoughtful mix of pastels and paint. The teachers advise the children to look closely at their work and develop an individual abstract style.
99. The children's work is displayed well and there is an interesting selection of artwork displayed around the school. This has been purchased by the school or donated and shows a good range of styles and media. There is a little art from different cultures but this could be usefully extended.
100. The subject leader is newly appointed and is due to receive additional training next year. She provides satisfactory support by ensuring the scheme of work is covered and has already collected teachers' planning to evaluate and discuss. The coordinator has noted that the children's skills in drawing and painting are developing well as they move through the school but there is no strategy to assess the children's progress and help them reach higher standards. The resources for art are satisfactory and include an appropriate range of posters showing the work of famous artists.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

101. Standards in Design and Technology are average and the children, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. These standards have been maintained since the last inspection.
102. The children enjoy the practical tasks of designing and making. When asked why designs, including a list of materials are needed for making models, they replied 'otherwise you would not know what your model should look like, or what you need in order to make it.' The children benefit from being given choices of materials to use and acquire skills in handling them. They become competent in cutting, attaching and decorating paper and card and stitching or gluing materials together. Year 2 children

have been using string, card, dowel and tape to make winding mechanisms and have designed and made Joseph's coat of many colours. Their drawings are detailed and during the task they learned to make decisions about which materials work the best. They are not yet analysing the effectiveness of their designs and accept, too readily, the finished artefact without attempting to judge its quality. Year 1 children used fasteners and other joining techniques when they designed their spiders. Evidence from displays and photographs of previous work shows that an appropriate range of work is covered.

103. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection and this was good. The children were learning to read a recipe and were planning in groups how to make a fruit salad. It was well organised and a good discussion took place about utensils that could be used and food hygiene. The teacher challenged the children who made inappropriate decisions, ten apples or four grapes in their salad, for example. She helped them consider the realities of their task and make more sensible choices.
104. The subject is led satisfactorily. The school has adopted the nationally recommended scheme for the subject and is adapting these to meet the needs of the school. There is an appropriate range of tools, equipment and materials that are organised well and are used to support the learning. There are no procedures in place to assess the pupils' progress and help to raise the standards.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

105. The children reach average standards and make satisfactory progress. These standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. The coordinator is enthusiastic and leads the subject effectively by advising and supporting the other teachers. This means that the development of skills is taught systematically. There are no assessment procedures in place to monitor pupils' progress and help raise the standards above average. However, the subject is to become a focus in September 2002 and the school development plan shows that a rigorous programme is intended to improve teaching and learning and develop assessments.
106. Pupils are aware that the world reaches beyond their locality. In Year 2, the pupils are comparing their own locality to Tocuao in Mexico. The lesson was taught well and good questioning by the teacher consolidated the pupils' earlier learning. Resources such as photographs and maps were used well and this kept the pupils interested and motivated them to work hard. Earlier lessons were recalled that helped the children link work naming the countries of the United Kingdom and locating places on a map. The children can identify countries and seas and talk about the weather in different countries compared to England. The children also know of other places in this country, such as Blackpool, Birmingham and London. Their studies of the local area have enabled the pupils to talk about the places they pass on their way to school. In Year 1, good focussed teaching enabled the pupils to make progress recognising places on a map and globes where 'Barnaby Bear' had visited.

## **HISTORY**

107. The standards reached by children aged 7 are above average and they have made good progress. These standards have improved since the previous inspection. The subject is led well and the coordinator regularly monitors planning and advises the teachers on how to organise their lessons. The children have good opportunities to study history. They are taught well and are very enthusiastic. They visit historical locations such as Shugborough Hall and during the week of the inspection Year 1

pupils visited Cannock Chase Museum. When talking about what they had learned these children showed their developing understanding of the passage of time and how peoples' lives have changed. One child said, 'They played with wooden toys, a cup and ball, yesterday.' The average and higher attaining children realise that only rich children had 'proper' toys, that these would usually be made of wood, such as a doll's house and ball and cup. All the children understood that poor children had 'home-made' toys such as 'peg-dolls' and they made one of their own during the museum visit. They understand that times are very different now.

108. Year 2 pupils also have no doubt that life is easier in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. They are developing their sense of changes over time well. They are beginning to interpret the decisions people made that seem unusual today. Such as why people buried expensive foodstuffs like cheese and wine to avoid their loss in the fire of London. When looking carefully at pictures of the Crimean War hospital they make deductions and comparisons about hygiene and medical care then and now. The teaching of history is good. The teachers bring history alive for the children through good visits and challenging discussions.
109. Resources to support the teaching of history are satisfactory overall but the school has few historical artefacts for the children to look at and handle. There are no formal systems in place to assess children's progress and improve their standards.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

110. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are average. The school is teaching the pupils all the skills and understanding about using computers. However, not enough attention is given to providing opportunities for the children to use the computers, and other resources, in a range of different situations. The school has rightly identified ICT as a current target in its development plan, and staff have recently begun their national training.
111. Pupils knowledge and understanding of how to find things out is developing well through the use of CD-ROMs and early exploration of web sites. Some aspects of extending ideas and making things happen are developed well, for instance, control technology in Year 1 where pupils are learning to give instructions to each other as 'human' robots and by using floor robots. Children are learning to create images using art programs and to write text, and merge text with clip-art. In reviewing, modifying and evaluating work they can describe the effects of their actions and explain what they might alter in future work.
112. In the lesson seen, pupils used electronic keyboard word-processors to learn keyboard skills. These were taught soundly and their progress was monitored and supported well by two classroom assistants. Although no other lessons were seen all classes have a weekly ICT lesson and pupils are being taught the appropriate skills, especially using art programs, control and some word-processing and numeracy but there are too few programs for using data and creating charts and graphs. The pupils use electronic keyboards in music and are beginning to use the Internet to seek information, such as details about endangered animals linked to their studies in religious education and science. This is still at an early stage and the teachers have yet to identify really appropriate sites for children to use. The pupils enjoy ICT. They are keen to talk about what they do and to show their skills. The basic skills are being learned securely, and pupils can access programs, save their work and print-out their products. Those pupils who use computers at home are even more skilful and confident.

113. The leadership of the subject is satisfactory. The coordinator is supported by the head teacher, and another teacher has developed a suitable framework for self-assessment. The school has made a good decision to train the classroom assistants in ICT as well as the teachers and this is having a beneficial effect on the learning. There are no strategies to assess the children's progress and help improve their standards. The resources are satisfactory but some pupils have to use older machines that work slowly, and further software is required to support some aspects of the subject.

## **MUSIC**

114. By the time they are seven the children reach standards which are higher than average. They make very good progress. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Music has been a focus for development this year. The subject leader has very effectively supported changes. She has monitored lessons and helped teachers improve their practise resulting in good and sometimes excellent teaching. The resources have been reviewed and updated to a good standard.
115. Children in Year 1 have learned to clap in time and keep to the beat accurately as a class. In one lesson the teacher clapped or played complex rhythms for individuals to copy. The children concentrated extremely hard, especially when their own turn came, and clapped very accurately. The children are encouraged to hear rhythms in their heads and then clap them for others to guess. One child clapped the rhythm of Baa, Baa, Black Sheep and many of the others could identify it. Through demonstrating, the teachers help the children clap in time, pupils keep the beat accurately as a class.
116. The children in Year 2 use their voices skilfully, for example to create different weather sounds to the words, cold, soggy, miserable, shivering. This lesson taught by the coordinator was excellent. Her high expectations stretched both the children's imagination and their abilities. She skilfully taught them to compose a piece of music and to write down their compositions in a variety of ways including pictures, symbols, numbers as well as simple notation. The children built on earlier learning to complete this task and then read their music back when they played it. They performed their piece, changing the order and varying the sounds and speeds. The lesson developed to include percussion instruments as well as voices. Two very musically talented children were able to perform at a very high level. All the children know the names of instruments such as the guiro, Indian bells, rainmaker and maracas. They can choose instruments that will create the different qualities of sound required to represent raindrops, a thunderstorm or a rainbow.
117. The school provides opportunities to listen to a wide range of recorded music including that from many different cultures. Throughout the school the children sing well. They enjoy their singing, know hymns and songs by heart and can sing verses with varying degrees of loudness or softness. They respond well to a conductor and enjoy adding actions to their songs.
118. The subject is led well. The coordinator is a talented musician as is the teacher who plays the piano in assembly. The quality of their singing voices enhances the children's performances. All the children are used to performing to each other and to parents. They watch the conductor carefully and keep together. When two groups perform, one singing the other playing instruments, they keep their own part well and are aware of the other group's work. They are beginning to appreciate that their own



efforts are improving through practice. Once a year the children have the opportunity to hear instrumentalists perform live. The school needs to find ways of enriching the pupils' musical experience, for example by belonging to a choir or playing an instrument.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

119. Standards in physical education are above average and the pupils make good progress, as they did at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils take part in gymnastics, dance and games activities during the year and Year 2 pupils have swimming lessons. They make good progress and clear records are kept of their achievements.
120. Pupils understand the effects that exercise has on their bodies and are aware of the importance of warming up before beginning skills practices. For example, in a lesson in Year 1, the teacher asked the pupils to feel their hearts after the warm up to show how they were beating faster. The children know that when their blood flows quickly it is good for their bodies. Pupils work hard in the lessons and their behaviour is very good because they are offered activities that are well matched to their abilities with the appropriate level of challenge. In all the lessons, pupils with special educational needs are fully included in the activities and they receive good support from the classroom assistants.
121. The quality of teaching is very good overall. Teachers present themselves well by dressing appropriately for the lessons and paying due attention to safe working practices. They have good control and pupils respond by taking part enthusiastically. Lessons are planned very effectively and always have a good structure. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and use their own skills and expertise to help develop the pupils' skills. For example, in Year 2, the teacher was heard to say, 'Control the ball with the inside of your foot and use this technique,' before demonstrating the skill to a group of children. The pupils showed good control and had a good awareness of space as they dribbled the balls around the hall. The high quality teaching enabled all the pupils to improve their skills during the lesson. Opportunities are always given for the pupils to evaluate their own performance and that of others in order to improve their learning.
122. The coordinator manages the subject very effectively. She has monitored the teaching and given advice and support to staff. The staff have developed a good scheme of work that combines the national guidance with their own priorities for the children. This helps teachers to plan lessons and ensures that pupils are able to build on previous learning. Resources are of good quality. They provide pupils with quality equipment that is well stored and easily accessible. The school needs to find ways of enriching the children's physical education experiences especially for those pupils who show particular talents.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

123. The standards in religious education are above average, as they were at the time of the last inspection. The subject is led well, with clear guidance and good support given to the teachers. The scheme of work, developed by the coordinator alongside a local authority adviser, is effective and recommends exciting activities. The school is developing appropriate assessments strategies, and the coordinator responds to teachers' planning with help and advice. She monitors standards through looking at the children's work. The resources for the subjects are good and support learning in

the different world religions. The religious education provision would be very good if pupils were given more experiences of a range of world faiths.

124. Religious Education is taught well. The teachers have good subject knowledge. They use links with other subjects and areas, such as assemblies and personal and social education, to reinforce the learning. Links with English were developed when the pupils wrote letters to the pastor the local Baptist Church thanking her for showing them the Church furniture. Their letters included further questions and she responded, answering their queries. Visits and visitors based on local churches make the subject interesting and exciting events such as the 'christening' of a doll at the local Church was particularly exciting. Following this, discussion was used effectively and the pupils confidently shared opinions and feelings. For example, one child wrote his concerns about how a disabled person could be baptised in the pool at the Baptist Church.
125. The resources are treated with respect and are used well. A Year 2 class insisted that the teacher showed them that her hands were clean before they allowed her to handle a bible. The teachers use practical experiences well. In Year 2, for example, the children listened to rain forest music and then heard a story about a panda threatened by the destruction of its food supplies. The music and text were used well and the children went on, very thoughtfully, to make posters and badges to support wildlife preservation. Moments of reflection, such as this, are used to good effect as the pupils are given many opportunities to apply their learning to their daily lives.
126. The teachers have high expectations and pupils respond well, they listen attentively and work quickly and with pride in their achievements. They are developing a sound knowledge and understanding of the Christianity and other major world faiths. This is done, for example, through learning stories and hearing extracts from religious literature about the birth of Jesus, Rama and Sita, Mohammed and the Sikh gurus. They explore the special nature of artefacts found in believers' homes and places of worship. They are learning respect for their traditions and those of others and enjoy celebrating festivals, such as Diwali, Eid and Easter. This work is linked to learning about living in a community and applying what they have learnt to their daily lives, for example, awareness of others' feelings, friendship and honesty.