

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **CHASETOWN COMMUNITY SCHOOL**

Chasetown, Burntwood

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique reference number: 132731

Headteacher: Dr Linda James

Reporting inspector: Alan Tattersall  
20466

Dates of inspection: 10<sup>th</sup> - 13<sup>th</sup> March 2003

Inspection number: 253924

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Special
School category:	Community Special
Age range of pupils:	4 -11 Years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Church Street Chasetown Burntwood Staffordshire
Postcode:	WS7 8QL
Telephone number:	01543 686315
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Councillor Steven Norman
Date of previous inspection:	First Inspection

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

20466	Alan Tattersall	Registered inspector	Mathematics, Music, Foundation Stage	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further? How well is the school led and managed?
11575	Catherine Fish	Lay inspector		How well does the school work in partnership with parents? How well does the school care for its pupils and students?
1224	Graham Todd	Team inspector	Physical Education, Information and Communication Technology, Design and Technology, Art and Design, Special Educational Needs	
14691	Jenny Hall	Team inspector	Science, Religious Education, Personal, Social and Health Education, Educational Inclusion	How good are the curricular and other activities?
20024	Paul Wright	Team inspector	English, Geography, History, Citizenship English as an Additional Language	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development?

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Chasetown Community School opened in September 2001 as part of Staffordshire's reorganisation of its special educational needs provision. Pupils and staff have transferred from pupil referral units to a refurbished building on a new site. There are 58 pupils on roll aged between the ages of 4 and 11. Of these 50 have statements for emotional and behavioural difficulties and four have autistic spectrum disorders. The school also acts as a pupil referral unit for 8 pupils permanently excluded from primary schools in Staffordshire. At present there is only one pupil of reception age, in school, who receives lessons in the class for pupils in Year 1 and four girls. When they join the school, most pupils' attainment is below average. The large majority of pupils are white. One is from a mixed background and there are no pupils for whom English is an additional language. 27 pupils receive free school meals, which is a high proportion for a school of this type. Pupils are drawn from the whole of the Staffordshire area. The school also supports pupils with emotional, behavioural and social difficulties in mainstream schools, including providing staff training programmes. Three teaching rooms were being built and nearing completion during the inspection week. As a result 2 classes for the youngest pupils were in the same room during the inspection. Most of the pupils' outdoor play and games areas were out of use due to the building work. The assistant head teacher is acting as deputy head teacher during the post holder's long term absence. There is also one vacant teaching post.

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

This is a good school with many very good and excellent features. The headteacher provides very good leadership and management and a clear direction for the school. This has enabled the school to become well established and successful in a very short time in spite of the difficulties posed by building developments. Consequently, pupils already achieve well and make good progress. The quality of teaching is good. The school provides good value for money.

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

- Pupils make good progress in most subjects, including English and mathematics.
- Teaching is good and teachers plan lessons well.
- The school takes very good care of pupils and ensures attendance is very good.
- The headteacher, ably supported by the acting deputy headteacher, provides very strong leadership and management for the school.
- The school has developed very effective links with the community and other schools and is very successful in returning pupils to mainstream schools.
- Staff work very well together and have an excellent commitment to the school and desire for it to succeed.

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

- The majority of pupils do not have the opportunity to study music.
- Reports for parents do not cover all subjects and lack sufficient information about pupils' progress.
- Computers are not used sufficiently well to support pupils' learning throughout the day.
- Physical education and design technology do not have subject co-ordinators to help develop these areas of the curriculum.

*The areas for improvement will form the basis of the action plan prepared by the appropriate authority.*

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

The school has not been inspected previously.

## STANDARDS

The table summarises inspectors' judgements about how well pupils achieve in relation to their individual targets.

Progress in:	by Year 2	by Year 6	Key	
speaking and listening	B	B	very good	A
reading	B	B	Good	B
writing	B	B	Satisfactory	C
mathematics	B	B	Unsatisfactory	D
personal, social and health education	B	B	Poor	E
other personal targets set at annual reviews or in IEPs*	B	B		

\* IEPs are individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs.

There are satisfactory whole school targets for pupils to achieve in reading, writing and number. Pupils achieve them well. They make good progress and achieve well in English, mathematics, science, personal, social and health education, religious education and art and craft. Progress is satisfactory in information communication technology (ICT), physical education, geography and history. Progress in design and technology is good for pupils in Years 3 to 6 and satisfactory for those in Years 1 and 2. Pupils make good progress towards the targets set for them in their IEPs. Pupils make good progress in their personal development. Those pupils with autism and the few girls make the same progress as other pupils in the school.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are interested in learning. They try hard in most lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. The behaviour of pupils in class is good overall. Pupils' behaviour around school and when on visits in the community is very good.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils get on well together most of the time and enjoy very good relationships with staff. They accept each other's differences well and willingly undertake responsibility to help in school.
Attendance	Very good. Pupils enjoy school and are punctual to lessons.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Years 1 to 2	Year 3 to 6
Quality of teaching	Good	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 is good overall. It is good in English, mathematics, science and personal, social and health education, religious education, art and craft and good in design and technology for pupils in Years 3 to 6. Teaching is satisfactory for all other subjects including ICT. Teachers promote pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy well. They plan effectively to ensure that pupils who have autism and the few girls are fully included in lessons. However, teachers do not consistently promote pupils' skills in using computers in lessons. A strength of teaching is the effective planning of lessons to make good use of the time available to promote pupils' learning. Teachers have very good relationships with pupils. The very good working relationship between teachers and teaching assistants ensures that they work together effectively to promote pupils' progress. Homework is set regularly and this makes a good contribution to reinforcing pupils' learning in school.

#### OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The school ensures that pupils study all the subjects of the national curriculum with the exception of music. Not all pupils are taught music. There are very effective links with other schools and the local community to promote pupils' learning. There are very good measures to ensure that all pupils including boys and girls and those who have additional special educational needs receive equal opportunities to learn.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	There are no pupils for whom this applies.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. The school has effective arrangements to promote pupils' personal, social, moral and spiritual development. The promotion of pupils' cultural development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very well. Health and safety procedures and the management of child protection is very good. The school checks what pupils are learning satisfactorily. The school's measures to encourage good behaviour are effective overall. There are very effective systems to encourage very high levels of attendance.

The school ensures that the plans to promote pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy are effective. Although currently additional extra-curricular activities are satisfactory there are good plans to provide courses out of school hours. Pupils benefit very well from many visits in their community and the large number of adults who visit the school. The school does not include all subjects in the annual report of pupils' progress and there is not enough detail to inform parents and carers sufficiently about pupils' progress. Parents and carers have a very high regard for the school and are very supportive and the school ensures that there are very good links.

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

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. Although the school has only been open for 18 months the headteacher's very good leadership and management skills has ensured that the school is already achieving good standards. She receives strong support from the acting deputy head teacher and the Key Stage 2 co-ordinator.



How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	Satisfactory. The governors support the school well. They have assisted the school to become established, particularly in forming very good relationships in the locality. They are aware of the need to take an increasingly active role in checking how well school developments are progressing.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. Pupils' progress is checked and satisfactory targets set for improvement in their literacy and numeracy skills. The school is constantly reviewing its work in order to improve and evaluates its developments well.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school makes good use of its finances to support developments and improve accommodation, resources and staff expertise.

Staff share an extremely strong commitment to move the school forward. The school recognises the need to appoint co-ordinators for physical education and design and technology and to improve the overall effectiveness of all subject co-ordinators in raising standards in their subject. At present the school has been unable to recruit a teacher. There is good provision for teaching assistants. Resources are good. The accommodation is satisfactory and will be improved further when the current building work is completed. Displays of pupils' work are very effective in celebrating their achievement. The school compares its success with other schools well and makes a good effort to obtain the best value for pupils in the work that it does.

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

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school is approachable and works closely with them</li> <li>• They receive good information from the school</li> <li>• Their children like school</li> <li>• The school has high expectations for their children</li> <li>• Their children make good progress and become mature and responsible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A few parents do not think that their children get the right amount of work to do at home.</li> </ul>

Inspectors agree with what pleases parents the most. The school is approachable and it works closely with them. Children are enthusiastic about what goes on in school and enjoy coming; they make good progress academically and in their personal development. Although inspectors agree that the general information provided to parents is good and the annual review process is good. However they judge that annual reports of children's progress are unsatisfactory. The inspection finds that the school sets a good amount of homework.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. When pupils start school their levels of attainment are low often because they have had a disrupted education. However, pupils are now making good progress and achieve well. This is because teaching is good. Although pupils' attainment when they leave the school is below average overall, a few achieve National Standards in English, mathematics and science. Pupils achieve well in relation to the targets that are set for them in literacy and numeracy. They also achieve the targets set for them to improve their behaviour and personal development.
2. The whole school targets in English, mathematics and science are satisfactory and pupils are making good progress towards achieving these.
3. The good planning for pupils in the reception year ensures that they learn effectively alongside pupils in Year 1. This enables them to make the same progress as other pupils in the school. The work that is planned for them is suitable to enable them to get off to a good start in learning, succeeding at tasks that are appropriate for their age.
4. The school has successfully incorporated the National Literacy Strategy into English lessons. This ensures that pupils achieve well and make good progress in all aspects of literacy. Teachers place equally good emphasis upon promoting pupils' skills in reading and writing as they do with speaking and listening.
5. Pupils achieve well in mathematics because lessons are planned well in relation to the National Numeracy Strategy and the whole school scheme. Pupils are confident in their work and respond well to the tasks because they are planned effectively for them to enable them to understand concepts in a logical order. The continued improvement to the subject is leading to a higher level of challenge with tasks matched well to pupils' attainment.
6. Pupils make good progress and achieve well in science. This is because the subject is made interesting and there are high expectations that pupils will carry out regular experiments and investigations. Pupils' achievement in ICT is satisfactory overall. They enjoy using computers and are keen to learn. The lack of consistent and regular practice in using computers in most subjects to consolidate skills and learn new ones prevents progress from being good.

7. Pupils make satisfactory progress in humanities. Overall pupils make satisfactory progress in physical education although progress in swimming is good. The subject lacks a co-ordinator to take the subject forward for pupils to make better progress.
8. Pupils throughout the school make good progress in personal, social and health education. This is because of the way that the school supports their personal development throughout the day.
9. The small number of autistic pupils receive guidance and support that matches their needs well. Consequently, they make good progress in line with other pupils in the school. Pupils without statements attend school for a short period because they have been excluded from local primary schools and receive good support so that they make effective progress. The high level of their success in re-joining mainstream schools is testament to this. Teachers are sensitive to the needs of the small number of girls in school and they ensure that they make the same progress and achieve as well as boys.
10. Pupils achieve well in improving their behaviour through the effective strategies the school employs. Overall, pupils behave well and this enables them to concentrate on their work in lessons and so make good progress in their learning.

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

11. Pupils enjoy coming to school and this enthusiasm is reflected in the very good rate of attendance. Parents and carers confirm that their children like school.
12. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. Most pupils respond positively and often enthusiastically to the demands made of them. They concentrate well and listen carefully to the guidance and instructions of staff. For example, in a very good numeracy lesson for pupils in Year 4, pupils responded with great enthusiasm to very good teaching and the range of activities they had to complete. Pupils are proud of their achievements and keen to share their successes; they eagerly showed the inspection team the work they had on display around the school. Pupils are pleased by their own and each others' success, congratulating and applauding when each receives a reward for behaving. They are aware of the consequences of their own actions and accept loss of 'golden time' (short periods of the day when they can choose a favourite activity) if they have not behaved well. Older pupils concentrate well and remain on task for long periods. For example, in a good Year 6 practical geography lesson investigating the formation of volcanoes, pupils worked hard, took turns appropriately, were eager to answer questions and took advice in a constructive way.
13. Pupils' behaviour is good in lessons because they want to do well. Behaviour is usually very good around the school and in the dining room and assemblies. Similarly, pupils behave particularly well when they spend time in mainstream schools in the area. Pupils understand the school's code of conduct and recognise that they will be rewarded for their efforts, for example, one pupil said, "You can earn good things if you do your work". For most pupils the school's merit system makes a significant contribution to their good behaviour. Pupils understand the system and like the way in which they receive rewards for good behaviour. However, there are occasions when pupils, particularly those in Years 3 and 4, lose concentration with what they are doing and this affects their learning.

14. Most pupils play well together at break and dinner times. The pupils show very high levels of respect for the fabric of the building and the high quality of the displays. Minor examples of bullying were observed during the inspection, but these occasions are not common and are always tackled very well by the staff. In lessons occasionally pupils disagree but they respond well to staff's intervention. In discussions, pupils agreed that they felt confident that any incidents of bullying are dealt with appropriately. The school has not excluded any pupils.
15. Pupils make good progress in their personal development. They accept the many opportunities teachers and support staff provide to improve and extend their personal and social skills. In class, pupils show initiative by finding ways to solve a difficult problem without asking for help. Pupils contribute well to the high quality of discussions, which are important features in many lessons. They discuss personal and world issues in a sensible and thoughtful manner. They understand the need to wait their turn and are developing good listening skills when others are talking.
16. Pupils throughout the school take their classroom responsibilities and duties very seriously. They collect the register and milk, tidy chairs, serve snacks at break time and clear up. Pupils are improving in their ability to work independently and collaboratively, particularly in English, science and mathematics lessons.
17. Attendance is very good and compares very favourably with similar schools. Most absences are for legitimate reasons. There are one or two pupils who have more than the very occasional unauthorised absences, but these instances are well known and handled correctly by the school and the education welfare office. Figures for last term, when compared with figures for the previous year, show that for a number of pupils the level of unauthorised absences has dropped. Pupils are punctual to school and lessons start on time.

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

18. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. The quality of teaching is good in English, mathematics, science, personal, social and health education, art and craft and religious education. The quality of teaching in physical education, humanities (geography and history) is satisfactory. There is occasionally good teaching in the ICT suite however, the quality of teaching of ICT is satisfactory overall because teachers do not use computers sufficiently in lessons to support learning. There are good examples where teachers plan for pupils to use computers to support their learning for instance when pupils use the mouse to assemble parts of a growing bean plant in a science lesson for pupils in Year 1. This provides good reinforcement of learning particularly since pupils relate the parts of the plant on the screen to their beans growing in jars in the classroom.
19. Teachers support pupils' literacy skills well in other subjects. They recognise the importance of communication and use questioning effectively to prompt pupils to think. They give good praise for pupils' attempts at their own ideas; for instance, when pupils are asked what will happen next in a story. This encourages pupils to make appropriate responses and leads to them making good progress in developing vocabulary throughout the day. This was very evident in 'circle time' lessons. As pupils sit together, the teacher promotes effective oral communication. Pupils take turns to speak and this reinforces important skills in holding successful conversations. Teachers encourage pupils to read during most lessons to find information. The extensive displays throughout the school of pupils' written work in

different subjects demonstrates how well other subjects contribute to promoting writing skills. Consequently, teachers promote pupils' literacy skills well.

20. The quality of teaching is good and often very good in mathematics. Resources are good and teachers use them well to ensure there is a good range of activities in lessons. Numeracy is used well in other subjects especially those such as science where pupils are expected to measure and calculate when carrying out experiments.
21. A strength of teaching throughout the school is that it is well planned and lessons are organised well. For example in English teachers plan lessons so that they follow a familiar format for pupils to discuss, read and write. Effective use is made of the good allocation of time for the subject by providing a routine so that pupils know what they are expected to do such as individual reading. There is a strong commitment by teachers and teaching assistants to plan and work together to help pupils to learn. This is an important factor in ensuring that pupils' receive effective guidance on how to tackle difficult tasks. A feature of lessons is the way that adults ask pupils further questions rather than simply answering their queries. Teachers and assistants regularly guide the pupils to come to their own conclusions; for example often when responding to a pupils' question they reply "What do you think?".
22. Lessons have a good introduction. The objectives are set out well so that pupils know what they will learn. Through reminding pupils of the objectives for the lesson as it progressed, pupils kept to their tasks well. However teachers do not consistently provide an opportunity at the end of lessons for pupils to discuss what they have learned. When they do, it provides a very good opportunity for the teacher to check if pupils understood what they had learnt and this provides a solid basis for planning the next lesson. For instance, in a mathematics lesson for pupils in Year 6, the objectives such as understanding the 'random effect' are set out on the whiteboard and referred to frequently. The teacher is able to determine who can explain the effect and ensures that higher attaining pupils move on to more challenging work.
23. Another strength of teaching is the way in which pupils' individual needs are met. Planning is very effective in ensuring that the work is appropriately challenging and relevant. Pupils on the autistic spectrum receive effective support to enable them to make the same progress as other pupils in the class. Teaching staff and classroom assistants have undergone training in autism from the local autism outreach team and the school's educational psychologist, who has great expertise. This training has been very helpful in developing an understanding of ASD pupils and improving the way that teachers and assistants provide support for them. Although there are only a small number of girls, staff are alert to their needs and ensure that tasks and resources are suitable to the needs of both boys and girls.
24. Teachers carry out regular tests to check how well pupils are learning in English and mathematics. However, the school is aware that teachers' formal tracking of pupils' day to day progress in most subjects is a point for development. This tracking is needed to inform more specific planning for individual learning and the setting of sharper targets for pupils to achieve.
25. Overall teachers manage pupils' behaviour. The school's effective structures are used well and consistently by staff. However the present large classes for the youngest pupils make it more difficult for teachers to keep up the high standard of managing pupils' behaviour consistently. On a few occasions they were less successful in achieving good behaviour when pupils were working in a different environment. For instance, when changing activities in class in subjects such as in

design and technology, working in the ICT suite or in the hall during physical education.

26. Good use is made of quiet background music. In a lesson for pupils in Years 4 and 5, the tranquil sound of dolphins helped to create a calm, settled and respectful atmosphere. The strategy was very effective. Whilst pupils worked and listened to the music, the teacher made cross-subject links to their work on sound in science. "Can sound travel through water?" she asked. The pupils readily agreed that it did.
27. Teachers play a very positive part in preparing pupils well for their mainstream school experiences. For example exceptional teaching was evident in the preparation and support for pupils in Year 5 who joined an art lesson in a local school. There were very high expectations that pupils would behave well so that they could work effectively together to create a sculpture to bring back to school. The teacher struck the balance between ensuring that pupils understood how to behave in public and in the host school and building up their enthusiasm for the art they were to do. The encouragement and the high level of regard for their ideas ensured that pupils contributed extremely well to the project developing ownership of their sculpture and pride that it would be displayed in their own school. Consequently, they made excellent progress to achieve in line with those from mainstream school.

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

28. The quality and range of learning opportunities for pupils are satisfactory overall. There are many positive features. In the relatively short time that the school has been in existence, the planning of National Curriculum subjects has been satisfactory. In the case of English, mathematics and religious education, planning is good. The arrangements to promote pupils' literacy and numeracy skills during the teaching of other subjects are effective. In most other subjects, commercially produced schemes, or nationally available guidance is used effectively. There has been a satisfactory start to provide discrete lessons in ICT. Presently most pupils do not receive their statutory entitlement to music, but plans are in place for the development of this subject. The emphasis placed on the teaching of literacy and numeracy is good with the result that pupils achieve well in these areas. The very rich and stimulating display in classrooms and around the school reflects the broad and interesting range of learning opportunities provided.
29. Work has started on writing plans to bring all the school's work on personal, social, health and citizenship education into a whole school co-ordinated programme. At present pupils' personal, social and health education is planned appropriately and includes sex and relationships and drugs education. However planning for the weekly lesson for each class in this subject, is being developed. The daily twenty minute session after morning registration, whilst used productively, does not always concentrate closely enough, as is intended on the timetable, on targets from pupils' individual education plans. The school is working hard to adapt the new plans to meet the particular needs of pupils on roll.
30. Pupils of reception age follow appropriately the guidelines for teaching pupils under five. The current reception child shares a class with pupils in Year 1. The class follow the same timetable but there is separate planning for groups of pupils according to their stage of development. As a result the needs of all pupils are met. Children follow the 'Foundation Stage' guidelines and staff measure progress against the 'stepping stones' for mathematical development, communication and personal,

social and emotional development. There is good provision of additional tasks to promote physical development through opportunities to play with large apparatus and toys and follow a good range of tasks to develop manipulation, for instance, by threading beads. Planning is good to develop creative skills well following tasks in art and craft. There is similarly good planning to wider knowledge and understanding of the world during lessons in science, humanities and design and technology.

31. The school has established a very good record of returning pupils to mainstream schools when they leave at the end of Year 6. This is facilitated by the way that pupils make good progress in their academic and personal development. Last year, thirteen of the eighteen pupils who left the school joined mainstream schools. In the short time the school has been open, eight pupils have left before the end of Year 6. Of the six who remain in the county, four have entered mainstream school. The school is very successful in helping pupils who attend as pupil referral unit placements to progress back quickly into mainstream school or receive assessments for other suitable placements.
32. Links with other schools are very good, not only in helping prepare pupils for transfer but also to give pupils the opportunity to work with mainstream pupils. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 are currently involved in an arts project at another school. A small number of pupils in Year 6 have completed a citizenship project with other schools on being good role models. Over a four week period, they all worked together with a theatre group. Pupils developed the confidence to present their work at a public performance.
33. In addition to the school's strong relationship with other schools, many very effective links have also been established in the local community to promote, extend and enrich pupils' learning; for example, for pupils to meet and work with the community police, the local church, artists in residence, and the education welfare officer. Pupils were delighted with the visit of an 'eight foot book worm' during the inspection week to encourage them to read and write. Pupils visit sites of historical importance. A musician in residence and other musicians are booked for next term to provide music in the absence of regular music lessons.
34. Although transport arrangements limit the opportunity for extra-curricular activities, teachers and assistants make good use of time each day to promote pupils' learning. There are plans to provide a computer club, to bid for funds to extend the school day, and to build an adventure playground. Arrangements for homework, especially in English and mathematics are good.
35. The arrangements for pupils' spiritual development are good. Staff are quick to respond to pupils' excitement at the natural world. When the youngest pupils, for example, spontaneously show their delight on arrival in the classroom on Monday to find their seeds have grown over the weekend, they are praised for their observations. As the visiting artist painted the whale mural in the hall, a Year 6 boy advised that the whale's eye should be repainted to make it "more dynamic" and the artist duly complied. The painting of the whale is just one example of the extensive displays in corridors and classrooms to stimulate pupils' imagination.
36. Pupils' moral development is good. From the moment pupils arrive at school they experience consistently good support from staff to promote their understanding of right and wrong. They are encouraged to consider ethical questions such as in science they consider issues about pollution and conservation. Pupils understand

the system of rewards for good behaviour and the consequences of bad behaviour because staff reinforce these values consistently well.

37. Pupils' personal and social development is promoted well. For example pupils in Years 1 to 3 learn how to work better together, obey rules of games, understand fair play, how to apologise, and have fun whilst learning. The daily sessions called 'golden time', where pupils choose activities if their behaviour has been good, are well developed and effective. They enjoy the opportunity to choose activities such as jigsaws but accept without fuss the loss of a few minutes of this time if their behaviour has been inappropriate. However, there is no forum for pupils to contribute to the life of the school and be involved in making decisions.
38. Opportunities provided for pupils' cultural development are satisfactory overall. Pupils have worked with a visiting musician and an artist in residence. They contribute to a local poetry project and visit the theatre, for example, to see 'The Snow Queen'. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 learn about Ancient Greek pottery and designs, and they are introduced to the Hebrew alphabet in religious education. There are plans to broaden the opportunities for pupils to visit the places of worship and meet people from other faiths and to extend the school's collection of artefacts in religious education. At present, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to learn about cultural diversity.

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

39. The school has been successful in creating an environment in which the pupils feel valued. The success in this is evident in the very good relationships that have been built between the pupils and the staff. The pupils are greeted at the door every morning by a member of staff. This makes them feel welcome. Staff take very good care of the pupils and strive to ensure their welfare. The school is taking all due care during the current building programme to safeguard the pupils. There are very good procedures for first aid and the administration of medication. Risk assessment is carried out correctly, including the arrangements in subject areas such as design and technology and science.
40. The school is particularly vigilant in the area of child protection. All staff receive initial training which is updated every year; staff new to the school are trained within their first year. Thus all staff are familiar with the procedures that must be followed, including who to inform and how to record concerns. Similar care is taken to ensure that those pupils looked after in the community are as well supported as possible.
41. The headteacher and her staff have a very good knowledge of the pupils. The good communication developed and maintained between home and school means that the school knows what is happening in the pupils' lives. Therefore, the staff are able to tailor support to pupils' needs. There is frequent contact between home and school by telephone, often on a daily basis if there are particular concerns or issues to be resolved.
42. Pupils' personal development is checked well and appropriately recorded on a monthly basis. Parents are kept apprised of their child's development in this area. Both annual reports and reports for the annual review of pupils statements of special educational needs provide good details of the pupils' personal development, including good details about their attitude to work. The personal support given to the pupils by all staff is good.



43. The school has good procedures to promote good behaviour and tackle any form of bullying or harassment through the use of an assertive discipline system. These are well known throughout the school and much appreciated by parents. All staff are given an update each September on how to improve pupils' behaviour. As new staff join the school they receive the appropriate training as soon as possible. Records of incidents, especially those involving any form of physical intervention are checked well, meticulously recorded and reported regularly to the governing body. Parents regard 'golden time' as a good incentive. The targets for pupils to improve their behaviour are mostly good and specific. Teachers use these well and often refer to them in lessons, by pointing them out to the pupils, encouraging them to understand what they have done wrong. Teachers and assistants follow agreed approaches for supporting pupils who have challenging behaviour and through their consistent actions ensure that pupils develop strategies for improving their behaviour. If all of the school's behaviour management strategies have been exhausted, the school has adopted a policy of a multi-disciplinary reassessment of a pupil's special education needs. This may lead to the pupil being placed more effectively elsewhere.
44. Attendance is promoted very well. Those pupils who attend regularly are rewarded with certificates. The class with the best attendance each term receive a cup and vouchers for a popular fast food chain. The school and the education welfare officer work very hard together to resolve the few attendance problems that arise, either with pupils with known problems or when the occasional emergency arises.
45. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory. Day-to-day assessment, in the form of questioning different groups of pupils, encouraging them and setting challenges is good. The marking of pupils' work is more variable and leaves room for improvement. The best marking is not only encouraging, but also shows pupils how they can improve their work. The systems to assess pupils' work in the majority of subjects are satisfactory, but in several subjects, where co-ordinators are not in place, for instance, design and technology and art and design, satisfactory systems have not been established. There are good arrangements to track progress in the reception year.
46. The school has been working hard collecting and analysing data about learning and behaviour in order to gauge the progress pupils are making and to set better targets. Information from assessments was used well to allocate pupils to the three classes in Year 6 according to attainment. The targets on pupils' individual education plans vary in quality. The best ones are precise and are a good guide with which to measure progress in English and mathematics. However, some are too general; for example, 'To complete more challenging work to stretch his ability - by using all four operations'.
47. The system for checking and reporting on pupils' progress currently in place lacks some coherence. Annual reports do not report on all subjects. The targets in school reports do not always appear in annual reviews and the targets set in annual reviews do not necessarily follow through to individual education plans. Currently, assessment practice lacks the necessary rigour to track pupils' progress as they move through the school.

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

48. Parents and carers hold very positive views of the school and are very supportive of it. This was demonstrated by the good level of return of the questionnaire. Analysis of

the views, together with discussions with them, shows high levels of satisfaction. All feel comfortable to approach the school with any problems or comments and that if there is a difficulty the school works closely with them. Most are very happy with the provision made for their children and the progress they make both in lessons and in personal development. These positive points are endorsed by the findings of the inspection team. A few parents and carers wanted pupils to have more homework. However, the inspection revealed that the school provides a good amount of homework. There is a good homework policy and pupils take work home regularly.

49. Parents and carers are pleased with the information they receive about their children. They regard annual reports as useful, detailed and informative. However, annual reports do not meet statutory requirements because they do not give a clear idea of what their child has learnt, is able to do and about progress made in their learning. Music, ICT and design and technology are not reported. Reports tend to lack sufficient detail about achievement for example, in English, 'Has a sound grasp of the rules of grammar and punctuation'. The reports often omit to set targets for improvement. This reduces their value in informing parents of how well pupils are learning and what pupils need to do to improve.
50. The school holds good termly formal meetings and discussions about pupils' progress. These meetings are well attended because the school consults everyone about attendance at the meeting. Those unable to come into school are contacted by telephone, or through a home visit if this is easier for them. Many parents and carers attend the annual review of their child's statement of special educational needs. Those unable to attend are consulted in other ways. An important way of exchanging information and tackling any problems is through home school diaries that facilitate daily contact, particularly for children who travel by organised transport. Informal contact is well maintained over the telephone. Other information sent home in the form of newsletters and letters about class or school trips, events and outings are of good quality; they are helpful, informative and give a good flavour of what is going on. They provide information about what pupils will learn for instance, topics that will be covered throughout the year.
51. Parents and carers are expected to support the work of the school from the time the pupil enters it. They all sign both the home school agreement and the behaviour policy before their child starts attending. The school works hard with all parents and carers and has gained their confidence. The school catchment area is the whole county; this means that many parents and carers have extreme difficulty travelling to the school for meetings. The school helps by making home visits or providing transport for meetings. There are good plans to improve the involvement of parents and carers as the school develops further.

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

52. The success of the transfer to the refurbished building, establishment of the school and the aspiration to the highest standards owes much to the very good leadership and management of the headteacher. Through the effectiveness of her leadership and determination, the school has become firmly established in a short time and pupils' overall progress and achievement is already good. The targets that the school has adopted are designed effectively to continue raising standards further. A very significant achievement is that the headteacher has brought together the staff from the two original establishments and the new appointments to form a very strong team. They have an excellent commitment to team working and capacity to succeed in their efforts to ensure pupils achieve as well as possible.

53. The assistant head teacher has aptly stepped into the role of acting deputy head to give very strong support to the developments and running of the school. The head of department for pupils between Years 3 and 6, provides good support to the school's management. The headteacher ensures that the school has extremely high aims to achieve and these include achieving national awards such as Investors in People, the Inclusion Quality Mark and to receive a School Achievement Award.
54. One of the school's significant current developments is to develop the role of subject co-ordinators. Subject leadership is satisfactory in the majority of subjects. In physical education and design and technology, co-ordinators have yet to be appointed and this has had an impact on the development of these subjects. Most subjects have good action plans, improvements are required in role of the co-ordinator in checking and supporting teaching, improving assessment and the planning for and use of ICT. In the most established subjects such as mathematics, co-ordinators have set out the planning for what pupils will learn throughout the school and check what each teacher will teach. There is a recognition and it is a school target for development, that subject specialists should be able to work more with other teachers, providing guidance and example in the drive to raise standards further.
55. Governors are committed to the school and have worked hard to establish the buildings and staffing. They are ensuring that all necessary policies and procedures are in place and have begun to attend training sessions. They recognise the need to improve their effectiveness in shaping the direction of the school. A significant achievement is the effective support they have provided in forging close links with the local community. They are a strong advocate for the school and are rightly pleased with the successful partnership with the County Council Education Service in improving the school buildings.
56. The bursar and headteacher manage the school finances well in partnership with the County Council Education Service. Governors receive regular information of expenditure and have a good awareness of balances and what they are for. There is a good awareness of the costs of the school's services and it is now positioned well to make estimates and decisions about future spending to get the best value out of purchases. This will support the further development of the school improvement plan. This plan provides an important focus for school developments over the next few years and provides well-chosen priorities for development such as to improve the teaching of music and physical education. The school has acted promptly, following recommendations in the latest auditors' report.
57. The school undertakes significant self-review. Staff regularly analyse their work and determine if there is a more efficient way of working. This is particularly evident in the school office. Each member of the administrative staff is clear about roles. The employment of an assistant to provide direct clerical support to classroom staff is very effective. There is support for filing and creating resources such as preparing the useful home-school books for each pupil. This frees teachers and assistants to concentrate upon supporting pupils. This is a good example of the school's use of additional funding.
58. The school's procedures for performance management of staff are good. Support from the headteacher is largely responsible for the effective implementation of methods to improve pupils' behaviour. However, the checking of teaching now needs to concentrate more upon raising skills in teaching to ensure that the quality of

teaching is good in all subjects. There is a need to ensure that teachers are more aware of areas where teaching can be improved further. The school is committed to the professional development of staff and is continuing to take steps to ensure that there are sufficient opportunities to attend relevant training sessions. Recent ones have been for autism, Strategies for crisis intervention and prevention, assertive discipline, first aid and ICT. There is good support for individual members of staff; for example, one teaching assistant has recently completed her NVQ Level 3 training and two others are being funded for graduate teacher training. One of them is currently making a good contribution by working as an unqualified teacher, sharing a class with a teacher. Newly appointed staff are very well supported. A teacher appointed this term was given the opportunity of observing her class the previous term before taking up her appointment. She spoke glowingly of the support from the senior staff and her teaching assistant. The teachers and teaching assistants work very closely together and as a result the very strong teamwork is very evident in most lessons.

59. The accommodation is satisfactory, but will be improved imminently when the building work is completed. The library will be a useful resource and the school will regain use of the field and hard playground for physical education. The resources for ICT are very good, in art and design and mathematics they are good. They are satisfactory for all other subjects. The use of the new technology by administrative staff and by teachers for planning and preparation is good.

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

60. In order to raise standards the governors and headteacher should:
- Ensure that all pupils receive their entitlement to music. (Paragraphs 28,100-102)  
(This is a target for school development)
  - Ensure that reports for parents provide information for all subjects and sufficient detail about pupils' progress. (Paragraph 49)
  - Ensure that teachers plan more effectively for pupils to use computers to support pupils' learning throughout the day. (Paragraphs 6,18)
  - Appoint subject co-ordinators for physical education and design technology. (Paragraphs 54,89,106)

***In addition to the above key issues the school should also consider including the following in its action plan:***

Implement plans to improve the systematic checking of pupils' progress to enable the school to set more specific targets for pupils to achieve. Paragraphs 45,46  
(This is a target for school development)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	50
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	57

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	7	27	14	1		
Percentage	2	14	54	28	2		

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 two percentage points.

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	No of pupils
Number of pupils on the school's roll	58
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	27

S

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	0
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	10

### Attendance

Authorised absence

%
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Unauthorised absence

%
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School data	3.4
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School 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) 2002

One pupil at National Curriculum level 2 and above in English and two pupils at level 2 or above in science in National Curriculum Test and Task results.

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 1) 2002.

One pupil at National Curriculum level 4 in English and two at level 4 in mathematics and science in National Curriculum Test and Task results.

Two pupils at National Curriculum level 4 in English, four at level 4 in mathematics and 5 at level 4 in science in teacher's assessments.

The results are below the national average because of the pupils' special educational needs. It is inappropriate to display the small number of results in table, percentage or comparative form. Last year is the only year for which results are available.

### Ethnic background of pupils

### Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	57	0	0
White – Irish		0	0
White – any other White background		0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean		0	0
Mixed – White and Black African		0	0
Mixed – White and Asian		0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background		0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian		0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani		0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi		0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background		0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean		0	0
Black or Black British – African		0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background		0	0
Chinese		0	0
Any other ethnic group	1	0	0
No ethnic group recorded		0	0

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

## Teachers and classes

### Qualified teachers and classes: Y R – Y 6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	6.2
Average class size	8.2

### Education support staff: Y R – Y 6

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked per week	306

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Financial information

Financial year	2002-2003
	£
Total income	
Total expenditure	
Expenditure per pupil	
Balance brought forward from previous year	
Balance carried forward to next year	

The school opened in September 2001 and the first financial year began in April 2002 therefore it has not operated for a full financial year.

## Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3.4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3.0
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	1
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	58
Number of questionnaires returned	25

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	48	44	8	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	48	48	0	0	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	24	60	4	0	12
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	36	48	12	0	4
The teaching is good.	88	0	0	0	12
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	76	24	0	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	84	16	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	76	20	0	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	68	28	0	0	4
The school is well led and managed.	84	8	0	0	8
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	76	16	4	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	24	28	4	0	44

### Other issues raised by parents

No other significant issues were raised.



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

### **ENGLISH**

61. Pupils' achievement in English is good and they make good progress because teaching is good. The successful introduction of the National Literacy Strategy, with the emphasis on a structured approach to teaching has enabled teachers to plan successfully to promote pupils' learning. Written work in pupils' books is presented well and pupils make good progress towards specific literacy targets in their individual education plans. Those pupils with autism make the same progress their peers and there is no difference in achievement between boys and girls.
62. Pupils make good progress in reading because this is given a high priority throughout the school. There is a good allocation of time to provide regular lessons for literacy and a clear focus on developing pupils' understanding of texts. Pupils enjoy reading the big books together during literacy lessons, story times or 'Everyone Reading In Class' (ERIC) sessions. They read to an adult every day and are encouraged to take books home. Pupils in the early stages of reading are able to make use of the pictures and the repetition within the story to help them. Teachers and teaching assistants know their pupils well and use this knowledge effectively in lesson planning and guiding pupils in their tasks.
63. Achievement in speaking and listening is good. Pupils use and develop their skills well in lessons and during other periods such as circle and celebration times. Pupils ask and answer questions sensibly and clearly. They are willing to contribute and they are not afraid to make mistakes, as they know that their attempts will be valued. Pupils receive regular encouragement and staff pose effective questions to guide pupils to look for familiar patterns in speech. For example, in a good literacy lesson for pupils in Year 2, the teacher encouraged pupils to predict what the answer might be to her questions. Pupils learn to use patterns in speech. They enjoyed reading 'We are Daddies' with the class teacher and the higher attaining pupils were able to identify the rhyming words. Time was allowed for less confident pupils to respond, with praise sensitively employed, to encourage all pupils to participate in the lesson.
64. Teachers plan well to enrich lessons with relevant visits and meetings with visitors. For example, pupils in Year 5 enjoy their involvement with the 'Passport Aid to Learning' (PAL) project. A visitor dressed as a huge bookworm encourages pupils as they follow a programme to improve their reading and writing. They have visited a local newspaper office to see how newspapers are produced and created their own stories of 'Peter and the Wolf' as a journalist's report. When they complete a language booklet or 'passport', they are rewarded with vouchers for a fast food chain. This provides good encouragement for them to improve their creative writing and they make good progress.
65. Pupils' achievement in writing is good. Pupils receive a high level of individual support from teachers and assistants when carrying out writing tasks. Teachers plan well for pupils to work in groups according to their need or ability. This enables staff to work with small groups; for example, within the reception and Year 1 class to guide the way that they begin making marks on paper and gradually progress to overwriting and copying letters. Pupils make good progress because they have frequent opportunities to write. Pupils' work is celebrated with very good displays of written work in classrooms and corridors. Pupils in Year 2 receive effective support in

English lessons to improve their skills consequently their progress over time is good. Pupils in Year 3 spell frequently used words. They have made good progress in quickly suggesting words that begin with different letters. Older pupils develop their writing skills using a variety of styles, such as formulating letters, writing descriptions and composing poems. By the end of Year 6, pupils make independent use of dictionaries and thesauruses to support their own writing and understanding. Teachers make occasional good use of ICT in their classrooms to support and reinforce skills. For example, pupils in Year 2 regularly practice their keyboard skills. However, the planned use of computers to support all aspects of English is still under-developed.

66. Teachers plan well and develop pupils' literacy skills effectively in all subjects. They provide a good range of books and other teaching aids in lessons. Books are of good quality and engage pupils' interest well. Good library skills are encouraged such as using the index to find information. In history, pupils in Year 5 read and compared factual accounts about the ancient and modern Olympic Games. They picked out the salient facts and placed them into the correct chronological order. Pupils expand their vocabulary well and improve their descriptive writing during the day in lessons such as mathematics, humanities, science and religious education. Pupils in Year 6 have developed a wide vocabulary to describe how they solve problems and are currently making good progress learning to read, write and use in explanations the words to describe how probable an event is in mathematics.
67. Co-ordination of the subject is good. The subject leader has a clear view of what needs to be done next; for instance, the need for more opportunity to check what is happening in all classes. Pupils' reading ability is assessed twice yearly and this allows teachers to guide pupils in the choice of reading materials. Plans are in place for teachers to collaborate to ensure that assessments of written work are accurate and to retain regular samples of pupils' completed work from each term in order to check progress more systematically.

## **MATHEMATICS**

68. Pupils achieve well and make good progress overall. The quality of teaching is good and often very good.
69. Teachers plan lessons well to include all pupils. They ensure that girls, boys, and pupils who have autism make the same progress. Since there is good planning for individual needs, the work that pupils follow in reception and Year 1 is suitable for them. For instance, pupils work in groups to play games of jumping on the spot to count numbers and higher attaining pupils add numbers to 10. Teachers and assistants ask effective questions to encourage pupils to think. This enables higher attaining pupils to consider reversing problems such as finding out 'the unknown number to add' when they know the answer. A few pupils make sufficiently good progress to reach the National Standards at the end of Years 2 and 6.
70. Teachers apply the National Numeracy Strategy effectively and lessons usually begin with oral tasks and games. Teachers match their questions to each pupil effectively, according to how much each knows about the topic. For instance, pupils in Year 2 work with staff in groups making good progress walking along number 'stepping stones' and solving oral problems such as walking on from 10 to 14. Higher attaining pupils worked in a group to count in fives and tens. There was obvious delight when one pupil passed 100 and was discovering that the 'numbers started again' after he continued with 'one hundred and....'

71. Year 4 made very good progress in one lesson when they showed that they had a good understanding of numbers for instance, to add 90 to 10 to make 100. They made equally good progress in written work to add and subtract two digit numbers. The effective revision of past work by the teacher and the positive relationships and respect between pupils and adults were significant factors in supporting pupils' very good learning.
72. The school has worked determinedly to establish a whole school plan to teach numeracy. The co-ordinator has been successful in leading developments, particularly to assist teachers in establishing good planning for lessons and gaining more skills in teaching the subject with the goal of raising pupils standards further. This is evident in the way that teachers of pupils in Year 6 have met together to discuss their approach to the same topic with their own classes, where pupils' needs are different. It was clear from the three different approaches to teaching the subject of 'probability' that there is an extremely strong shared commitment to promote pupils' progress. Pupils make very good progress in this topic. Lower attaining pupils sort events such as travelling to the moon into a range including likely and unlikely. Higher attaining pupils are able to explain the word 'random.' They design dice that will provide different probabilities of throwing numbers. The school is planning to build on this successful example of collaboration and very high expectations further by developing the role of the co-ordinator. This will include visits to other teachers in their classes to guide them and to demonstrate good practice.
73. Teachers have a good informal knowledge of how well pupils are learning. The tests, which determine pupils' level of attainment, provide good information to guide teachers' planning. The school is aware that the next step is to retain more detailed information so that there can be more specific planning for pupils needs in numeracy in order to raise standards further.
74. Teachers develop language in numeracy well so that pupils can discuss their work effectively. There are good examples where teachers plan to give pupils the opportunity to apply their skills in numeracy in a range of subjects. Pupils in Year 6 for instance, measured elastic bands as they stretched and drew graphs to investigate forces in science. Pupils have occasional opportunities to use computers to support their learning such as drawing graphs of flowers they have investigated. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 take turns to use a computer in numeracy lessons for instance, to insert two digit numbers in a number square. However, they do not receive sufficient guidance to make better than satisfactory progress in ICT. Overall, teachers do not plan consistently and effectively for pupils to use computers.

## **SCIENCE**

75. Pupils make good progress and achieve well in science throughout the school because the quality of teaching is good, and because pupils are interested in science. Pupils work hard and enjoy very good relationships with the teachers and teaching assistants. The very small number of girls in school make as good progress as the boys because they are fully included in science lessons. The equally small number of pupils on the autistic spectrum also make good progress because they too have the same opportunities as the rest of the pupils to gain scientific knowledge and skill.
76. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject and prepare effectively so that they can work exceptionally well with their assistants. Good opportunities are provided to promote pupils' numeracy and literacy skills in science lessons. This happens for

instance, when pupils describe their experiments and measure weight and volume. Teachers usually encourage pupils to behave well but occasionally they are less successful. In a lesson for pupils in Years 3 and 4 to investigate rocks, pupils were not concentrating on their work consistently which slowed the pace of learning.

77. In the class for pupils in the reception year and Year 1, activities are matched well to pupils' different stages of learning. The youngest pupils use their senses well to identify fruits, vegetables and seeds. The pupils in Year 1 know that plants have roots and learn to compare the features of root vegetables. The pupils try to describe a parsnip. "It's like a carrot but a different colour" says one boy. The teacher combines science and English learning well by reading a story about an enormous turnip. Pupils are eager to find out about plants and staff share in the pupils' joy when they discover that their seeds have germinated over the weekend.
78. In Year 2 the teacher plans well to make very good use of a local woodland and pond to help pupils recognise small animals and plants. Pupils learn to use magnifying glasses and to match the features they observe to pictures on their clipboards. Staff encourage pupils to improve their recording skills; two lower attaining pupils draw a duck and a frog and another copies the words 'This is me with some of Class 2 pond dipping'.
79. In the higher attaining class for pupils in Year 6, standards are in line with those of mainstream schools for a few pupils. For example, higher attaining pupils use scientific terminology such as 'photosynthesis' and 'equation' to describe their work. They can for instance, investigate the best conditions for plants to grow and write at length about their experiments. Others can make an electrical circuit and draw diagrams. Although their work is checked, the marking does not provide sufficient guidance on how pupils can improve the standard of their diagrams.
80. The co-ordinator has only been in post for a few months but has made a good start in auditing and ordering resources and identifying priorities for development and training. Work has now begun on reviewing the commercially produced science programme that the school has been using. The current programme provides pupils with a good breadth of experience of science. However there is a need to adapt the programme to meet the range of learning needs of pupils; for example in modifying worksheets for lower attaining pupils. Although there are good examples, there is not enough planning for pupils to use computers to support learning in science. Sensors and a microscope have been purchased to link to computers, but have not been used.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

81. Pupils' achievements in art and design are good throughout the school. There are several examples where pupils attain high standards; for example, portrait work in Year 2, based on the work of artists such as Warhol, Picasso and Modigliani. In the Year 6 sketchbooks, there is also good development of ideas of facial expressions and different actions such as running and walking. Teaching is good and on occasions very good. There is effective planning that ensures all pupils regardless of the ability and special educational needs make good progress.
82. The school has widened the content of pupils' work by extending the variety of materials, developing the range of skills that pupils learn and by working with a local school and an artist in residence. A local artist has worked with the school to develop a large mural of a humped-back whale, which is situated in the hall. This has

provided many opportunities for the pupils to interact with the artist, develop design and sketching skills. During the inspection the pupils were involved in the Burntwood Beacon Arts Project and attended workshops taught by a sculptor, Neil Wood. Five pupils from Chasetown Community School worked with pupils from six other local schools. They all behaved impeccably, concentrated well, listened and worked extremely hard to produce plaster cast models of different animals to incorporate into a large plaster sculpture based on the theme of Cannock Chase.

83. In a lesson for pupils in Year 1, they became familiar with materials, tools, and techniques used in weaving. Higher attaining pupils work on the weaving task with limited supervision and guidance; they had a sound understanding of man-made and natural materials. The large class size means that the teacher and teaching assistants are fully stretched, especially in the afternoons when pupils become tired and restless and move from one activity to another.
84. The co-ordination of art and design is satisfactory. A new scheme of work is being implemented and resources are good. The LEA provides effective support and guidance to teachers and there is a good action plan in place to develop the subject.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

85. Pupils' achievement in design and technology is satisfactory for pupils up to the end of Year 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. Despite the lack of a co-ordinator, the subject is being taught on a regular basis and pupils receive good opportunities to work with a range of different materials and tools.
86. Teaching is satisfactory overall in Years 1 and 2. In a good lesson for pupils in Year 1, the story of the 'Three Little Pigs' was used successfully to encourage pupils to think about the materials for making a house. The teacher, through careful questioning ensured that the pupils considered which materials would be the strongest - straw, sticks or bricks. In this lesson, a computer was used successfully by one pupil, using 'drag and drop' skills to design a house and garden.
87. The quality of teaching and learning is good in Years 3 to 6 with some very good teaching being observed in Year 6. Teachers are using design and technology to make effective links with other subjects. For example, the making of untuned percussion instruments in Years 4 and 5 supports work in music and science. The construction of terraced houses in Year 6 is linked to work about the Victorians.
88. Pupils in Year 6 worked enthusiastically on the 'Crash Vehicle Project'; a road safety project led by outside instructors. Pupils had made cardboard models of cars the previous week and took careful measurements before testing them in a crash. Very good teaching helped the pupils to see how their vehicles had been damaged. The pupils thought carefully about how the cars had crumpled and what they would do to design a passenger compartment that was safer. They then worked hard with very good guidance and made another model incorporating their ideas. Although the design aspect of the project was taught well, generally pupils' design work is the weakest element of work in this subject.
89. Teachers are planning their work appropriately and ensure that the needs of all pupils are met. However, there is currently no subject co-ordinator to develop work in the subject further.

## **HUMANITIES (geography and history)**

90. Pupils' achievement and progress in humanities is satisfactory. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and occasionally good.
91. Pupils in Year 1 make satisfactory progress developing an awareness of their immediate surroundings. They were interested to talk about the route that they would take to school and what they might see. In a discussion about a proposed walk around school, one pupil remembered that they might be passing a church and exclaimed "That's where we learn about God." Although pupils were asked to draw things that they might see on a local walk, the opportunity to build upon this was missed because their work was not followed up effectively. Pupils in Year 2 develop more detailed knowledge of their surroundings and where they live, recognising familiar buildings on a map. In their topic on toys, they consider toys from the past and compare them with those in the present day.
92. Pupils throughout the school follow a satisfactory range of topics to extend their understanding of historical and geographical concepts. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 watched a video and discussed what children felt during evacuation in the Second World War. Pupils were engaged well initially but there was a missed opportunity to use the good artefacts that had been provided effectively enough. This reduced the rate of progress pupils were making.
93. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are aware that there are important sources of information to investigate to find out what happened in the past. In Year 6 they investigate the local area and create an impressive display of the local village in the past and in the present. There are good examples where pupils use computers but overall they do not have enough access to the Internet and CD-ROMs, to find information for themselves. Pupils in Year 6 enjoyed making models out of sand to represent volcanoes. Relationships between staff and pupils are very positive and questioning is used effectively to encourage pupils to think about their ideas. This enables pupils to begin to understand why volcanoes erupt. Pupils were amazed at the success of their models as the lava flowed 'just like real volcanoes.' Co-ordination is satisfactory and the school has identified subject leadership for improvement.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

94. In all classes pupils are achieving satisfactorily in ICT. Since the school opened, there has been a significant improvement in resources for ICT. Consequently, pupils now have very good access to computers. Good use is being made of the new computer suite to develop pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding of the subject.
95. In Years 1 and 2, pupils have used 'paint' programs to draw faces and houses. They are learning to use word processing programmes to change letter and font sizes and to use different colours. In science, pupils in Year 2 have taken turns to use the computer to 'assemble' the 8 steps in the growth sequence of a bean. This reinforces their learning as they observe their beans growing in class.
96. Teaching is satisfactory throughout the school. In Year 2, the teacher had prepared an excellent lesson for lower attaining pupils, to look at pictograms and block graphs, and then to analyse data about different creatures such as snails, frogs and fish.

They were interested in the work but distracted by the equipment around the room and made satisfactory rather than better progress by the end of the lesson.

97. Pupils in Year 6 were very interested in following up the 'Crash Vehicle Project', which they had been working on in design and technology. In an excellently prepared lesson, provision was made for the pupils to research an Internet site for facts about crash test results of different makes of cars. Good teaching and the application of previously learned skills enabled higher attaining pupils to record their results on a spreadsheet and interpret them using different forms of graphs. Pupils received very effective support from the teaching assistant to develop data handling skills. This lesson was a very good example of how computers can be used to support and reinforce pupils' learning. Other pupils use computers to show graphs that record the weights of the pupils in their class and undertake research on the Internet to find information about the Crimean War.
98. All staff have participated in recent training and the majority are confident in using a wide range of software and are able to give effective help to pupils. They have a sound understanding of the new technology such as digital cameras, email and use of the Internet. However, the school has identified further training requirements for staff; for example, the use of monitoring and control technology.
99. The co-ordination of ICT is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has worked very hard to develop the subject in the short time that the school has been open. The money from recent government initiatives has been very well spent to provide a first class facility. The school has an air-conditioned suite of eight computers and a data projector. There is a computer in each classroom, all the machines are networked and all have compatible software. However, there is still much to do; for example, ensuring that teachers' planning in subjects such as art and design and design and technology includes use of ICT. Other areas for improvement are the systematic checking of teaching, the assessment and evaluation of pupils' progress and the development of their skills.

## **MUSIC**

100. Only two classes have occasional music lessons and therefore pupils do not make sufficient progress in the subject overall. There is insufficient teaching of music. Pupils sing together occasionally such as at the carol service at Christmas. The pupils in the class for the youngest pupils have occasionally sung and played instruments in lessons. In the class for pupils in Years 4 and 5, they have sung and played percussion instruments. They took part in a good series of lessons to make and play percussion instruments in a project in science. This provided the opportunity for them to compose as they used their instruments to make sound effects such as rain. Pupils also appraised music; for instance, 'Peter and the Wolf' and the 'Carnival of Animals', accompanying the rhythm. Pupils have also benefited from visits by professional musicians.
101. Music plays a good part in pupils' lives during the day. They respond positively to the calming music that plays constantly in the corridors and during lessons in a few classes. This has a good effect on encouraging pupils' usually very orderly movement around the school and when they enter and leave their assembly. However, there is a missed opportunity for pupils to sing in assembly.
102. There has been a conscious decision to delay the introduction of a full programme of music until other subjects such as personal, social and health education are

established. However the school has identified two teachers who will begin to lead the subject and intends to provide current pupils with stopgap musical activities next term. For instance, by bringing in outside musicians and a musician in residence to promote pupils' learning in music throughout the school. There is currently insufficient planning to demonstrate how pupils will make progress as they move through the school. There is no assessment for music.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

103. Pupils' achievement in physical education is satisfactory. Because of the building works, the pupils do not yet have the use of their field and hard play space for games lessons. The school has compensated for this somewhat, by arranging swimming for each class on a weekly basis until the new building is completed.
104. Teaching is satisfactory. Good teaching in a swimming lesson for pupils in the reception year and Year 1 helped to reinforce the teacher's expectations of pupils' behaviour and water safety. There was a clear focus to the lesson, which was to improve pupils' confidence when swimming on their fronts. Teachers planned effectively for teaching assistants to provide individual support leaving the teacher to guide the group working towards their 'Turtle Award'. The majority of pupils made good progress in developing correct strokes and moved confidently through the water wearing armbands. In the other group, pupils in Year 2 listened carefully as clear instructions were given about using the floats and developing a smooth leg action. Close attention was paid to safety. However, pupils found it difficult to sustain concentration, their attention lagged and they made satisfactory progress in the lesson overall.
105. Where teaching is less successful for example in a gymnastics lesson in Years 3 and 4, the teacher did not insist on pupils listening during the warm-up session so that they could follow instructions more accurately. As a result a great deal of time was wasted in this session and resulted in pupils not making the progress that they should. Pupils were able to perform three different jumps with wide and narrow shapes. The higher attaining pupil performed a good jump with a soft landing and was motivated well by the teacher's praise. However, the pupils were not asked to evaluate or appraise the performance of each other.
106. There is not a co-ordinator to provide guidance for staff. However the school is receiving support from County Council Education Service to develop the teaching of physical education.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

107. Pupils make good progress and achieve well in religious education. The quality of teaching is good overall. Pupils have a positive attitude to lessons and want to learn. The small number of pupils on the autistic spectrum make as good progress as their peers because they are fully included in lessons.
108. Teachers plan well to develop aspects of pupils' literacy skills in lessons; reading, speaking, listening, and communication through role play feature in many lessons. The promotion of writing is more effective in Year 6. In reception and Year 1, pupils learn to share experiences about a girl feeling unhappy. With effective staff support they make 'Hope you are feeling better' cards. They make good progress, concentrating well on their task, actively engaged in their work. The lesson is planned effectively to meet the learning needs of all pupils. The youngest use a stamp to add



a happy face. Higher attaining pupils create their own imaginative 'Get-well' cards. Staff encourage good behaviour well during activities but less well when pupils transfer to a new task. They misbehave; time is lost as staff settle pupils once again and they do not complete as much work as they could.

109. Pupils in Year 2 learn about Judaism and the festival of Hanukkah. Pupils readily engage in role-play to enact the story. Pupils enthusiastically play parts such as the Syrian king who fights the Jews, quickly and effectively assuming roles. The re-enactment helps them to remember the event as they settle quickly from role-play to individual writing tasks.
110. In a well-planned lesson for pupils in Years 4 and 5, they made good progress learning about the importance of the Torah in the Jewish faith. The teacher provides good resources such as the photographs of Jews praying at the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem, and of a Rabbi reading the Torah and the Hebrew Bible. Pupils listen attentively, respectful that their teacher can read Hebrew. Pupils are inspired to try and achieve well in their attempts to read and write in Hebrew.
111. The teacher planned particularly well in relation to each pupil's reading skills in a lesson for pupils in Year 6 to read newspaper articles about rescues. The work stimulated pupils' interest and they made very good progress; they make the link from people who are rescued from accidents to 'rescuing' people from famine in third world countries. Staff relationships and management of the class are all highly effective in guiding pupils to make very good progress not only in their religious education work but also in the development of their reading, comprehension, writing, speaking and listening skills. No time is wasted as pupils complete one task and look for another to do, developing independent learning. Pupils enjoy their work and value the teacher's praise and encouragement.
112. The acting co-ordinator has made a good start in providing teachers with planning to meet the needs of all pupils in the school. There is a good balance between learning about Christianity and other faiths and developing moral values in religious education lessons. However the school recognises the need to extend opportunities for pupils to experience the diversity and richness of other faiths in the wider community for instance, by visiting places of worship and inviting leaders of other faiths to visit school. The subject makes a good contribution to promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

## **PERSONAL SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION**

113. Pupils make good progress and achieve well in the development of their personal, social and health education. This includes their knowledge of sex and relationships education, drugs education and health education. A good proportion of the timetable is devoted to short periods of improving pupils' personal skills and the way that they get on with each other; for instance, at drinks and choosing in 'golden time.' Teachers plan for these sessions well and overall, the quality of teaching is good and occasionally very good. The school makes very good use of the close relationship with the community to support the subject. The community police play an important role in teaching drugs awareness to the older pupils.
114. The school has high expectations in raising standards in the subject and staff are undergoing very high quality training to improve skills in leading lessons. Staff receive very good training in 'circle time'. Several classes share lessons with a visiting specialist where the class sit in a circle communicating, sharing ideas and co-

operating. These lessons are usually successful in encouraging pupils to participate and exchange ideas. In circle time for pupils in Years 1 to 4, pupils learn well how to work better together, obey rules of games, learn fair play, learn to apologise, and have fun whilst learning.

115. A small number of pupils in Years 3 and 4 are finding it difficult to behave well in circle time and do not participate as well as the other pupils. Consequently, they make less progress than the rest of the class. In contrast, pupils in Years 4 and 5 throw themselves wholeheartedly into the lesson, co-operating well with each other and willingly sharing views. They made very good progress discussing preferences for food and working in pairs and groups. Pupils enjoy the lessons and this encourages them to concentrate on activities. As a result, pupils engage very well learning that they must wait until they hold the 'toy mouse' before speaking. This promotes very good turn taking that guides them on how to relate to each other in other lessons throughout the day.
116. In a lesson to promote citizenship, pupils in Year 6 visited Cannock Chase. The lesson was successful in encouraging pupils to respect the courage of people in the past and to consider other cultures when they visited German war graves. Pupils are developing good concern for the environment, and a sense of ownership of public places; making sure that they do not leave litter after their packed lunch on the walk. A few have completed a citizenship project. The theme was "being good role models." Pupils worked with a theatre group and pupils from another school over a four-week period. They developed the confidence to present their work at a public performance.
117. Pupils do not write much about the subject until they are in Year 6. This quality of work is good. The higher attaining pupils can judge their strengths and weaknesses, identifying things they are "good at" and things "they wish they were good at". They know the skills needed to do a range of jobs and can write in their own words about their aspirations for future careers. They can look at photographs and challenge the stereotypes they represent.
118. The subject co-ordinator was only appointed to the school this term and has begun to implement the school's action plan for this subject. This includes writing a coherent programme for personal, social and health education lessons for each of the year groups.